

To: Members of the Performance
Scrutiny Committee

Date: 7 October 2021

Direct Dial: 01824 712554

e-mail: democratic@denbighshire.gov.uk

Dear Councillor

You are invited to attend a meeting of the **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** to be held at **10.00 am on THURSDAY, 14 OCTOBER 2021 BY VIDEO CONFERENCE.**

Yours sincerely

G. Williams
Head of Legal, HR and Democratic Services

AGENDA

1 APOLOGIES

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Members to declare any personal or prejudicial interests in any business identified to be considered at this meeting.

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

Notice of items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency pursuant to Section 100B(4) of the Local Government Act 1972.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING (Pages 5 - 12)

To receive the minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 15 July 2021 (copy attached)

5 MEIFOD WOOD PRODUCTS (Pages 13 - 78)

To consider a joint report by the Service Manager Client Services and the Commissioning and Planning Officer (copy enclosed) detailing the results of the consultation exercise to inform the future operation of service provision at Meifod and potential options for the service, including the recommendation from the Member Task and Finish Group, with a view to the Committee formulating recommendations to Cabinet in relation to future service delivery.

6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 79 - 102)

To consider a report by the Scrutiny Coordinator (copy enclosed) seeking a review of the committee's forward work programme and updating members on relevant issues.

7 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

To receive any updates from Committee representatives on various Council Boards and Groups

MEMBERSHIP

Councillors

Arwel Roberts (Chair)

Hugh Irving (Vice-Chair)

Ellie Chard

Pete Prendergast

Martyn Holland

Peter Scott

Geraint Lloyd-Williams

Andrew Thomas

Bob Murray

David Williams

Paul Penlington

COPIES TO:

All Councillors for information

Press and Libraries

Town and Community Councils

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 2000

Code of Conduct for Members

DISCLOSURE AND REGISTRATION OF INTERESTS

I, *(name)*

a *member/co-opted member of
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Denbighshire County Council

CONFIRM that I have declared a ***personal / personal and prejudicial** interest not previously declared in accordance with the provisions of Part III of the Council's Code of Conduct for Members, in respect of the following:-
*(*please delete as appropriate)*

Date of Disclosure:

Committee *(please specify)*:

Agenda Item No.

Subject Matter:

Nature of Interest:

*(See the note below)**

Signed

Date

*Note: Please provide sufficient detail e.g. 'I am the owner of land adjacent to the application for planning permission made by Mr Jones', or 'My husband / wife is an employee of the company which has made an application for financial assistance'.

This page is intentionally left blank

PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held by video conference on Thursday, 15 July 2021 at 10.00 am.

PRESENT

Councillors Ellie Chard, Martyn Holland, Hugh Irving (Vice Chair), Bob Murray, Paul Penlington, Arwel Roberts (Chair), Pete Prendergast, Peter Scott and Andrew Thomas

Cabinet Members – Councillors Bobby Feeley (Lead Member for Well-being and Independence) and Huw Hilditch-Roberts, (Lead Member for Education, Children's Services and Public Engagement) attended for agenda item 5

Observer – Councillor Meirick Davies

ALSO PRESENT

Corporate Director Communities (NS); Head of Finance and Property (SG); Principal Manager, Community Support Services (AL), Principal Manager, Education and Children's Services (JW), Scrutiny Coordinator (RE) and Committee Officers (KEJ & SLW [Webcaster])

1 APOLOGIES

Councillors Geraint Lloyd-Williams and David Williams

2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

The following members declared a personal interest in agenda item 5 –

Councillor Arwel Roberts – Chair of the Rhuddlan Dementia Group

Councillor Paul Penlington – Trustee and Volunteer for Young Carer's Charity and wife worked for Young Carer's Charity which provided services to the Council

3 URGENT MATTERS AS AGREED BY THE CHAIR

No urgent matters had been raised.

4 MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

The minutes of the Performance Scrutiny Committee held on 10 June 2021 were submitted.

Matters Arising –

Item 7 – Additional Learning needs Transformation Update (page 10, fourth bullet point) – it was confirmed that the issue of fewer resources available to undertake assessments through the medium of Welsh was a national issue which was raised

regularly with the Welsh Government and had also been referenced in the next Welsh in Education Strategic Plan for consultation in the next few months

Item 8 – Annual Performance Review 2020 to 2021 (page 13, second bullet point) – Councillor Paul Penlington confirmed that he had been provided with the relevant links to access the information he requested at the last meeting regarding cost breakdowns relating to Highways, Facilities and Environmental Services and Education and Children’s Services.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 10 June 2021 be received and approved as a correct record.

5 DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTS 2019 - 2020 & 2020 - 2021

The Chair welcomed the Corporate Director Communities and Councillors Bobby Feeley, Lead Member for Well-being and Independence and Huw Hilditch-Roberts, Lead Member for Education, Children’s Services and Public Engagement.

Councillor Bobby Feeley introduced the report (previously circulated) which presented the draft annual reports for 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 21 to the Committee for scrutiny prior to their submission to the Care Inspectorate Wales. The reasoning behind the presentation of both reports was explained given that the Welsh Government had suspended the requirement to produce an annual report in March 2020 due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Councillor Feeley reported upon the leading role undertaken by the Corporate Director during the pandemic at a local, regional and national level whilst continuing with business as usual to a large extent against a backdrop of financial pressures. The reports demonstrated much had been achieved in extremely difficult circumstances with progression and improvement in many areas. Although Councillor Feeley’s main responsibility was Community Support Services she was aware that the blended Education and Children’s Services had also achieved the same good quality services for vulnerable children. She had been pleased to step in for the launch of the new innovative children’s centre Bwthyn y Ddol. The annual reports reflected well on the teams working across social care in Denbighshire and tribute was paid to the excellent and dedicated staff working tirelessly to deliver the best possible services. In closing Councillor Feeley stated she was confident that Denbighshire’s Social Services would continue to adapt and improve and provide the care necessary for residents.

The Corporate Director Communities thanked all councillors for their ongoing support for Children and Adult Social Care. Although the Welsh Government had waived the requirement to produce a report for 2019 – 20 it was felt appropriate to catch up and produce that report and also to show what had been achieved during a most difficult and unprecedented time. The Corporate Director paid tribute to the workforce including informal carers, foster carers and those that provided services on the Council’s behalf in the independent and voluntary sectors, and to all who had stepped in to assist. Not everyone could be redeployed onto the front line but people from across the authority and communities had taken opportunities to assist in other ways and stepped forward into roles to deliver for the most vulnerable. The Corporate Director was pleased to present the reports to members highlighting how

much had been achieved over the last two years and provided assurances that those areas of work which had not progressed as expected would be taken forward. It was prudent to note that staff were currently dealing with increased cases and transmission of Covid-19 both in communities and care settings. The Corporate Director welcomed members' scrutiny of the reports and advised that Principal Managers Ann Lloyd and James Wood were also present to answer questions.

During a lengthy debate the Committee paid tribute to the commitment and dedication of all those involved within social care who had worked tirelessly during extremely difficult circumstances and also to those who continued to do so, going above and beyond what was expected in order to provide for those most in need. The Committee took the opportunity to raise questions and discuss various aspects of the reports with the Corporate Director, Lead Members and officers present.

Main discussion points focused on the following –

- the report followed the format suggested by the Welsh Government and whilst it was accepted that the report did not provide a high level of detail there were a vast number of services across Children and Adult Social Care and a balance was needed on the level of information contained to ensure the document was accessible to the public – the Corporate Director welcomed any specific topics arising from the report put forward by members for future scrutiny
- Wrexham, Conwy and Denbighshire local authorities commissioned a support service from Credu – WCD Young Carers which provided the largest element of support and also included holiday activities, trips and events; whilst Covid-19 had affected those excursions they would be resumed when possible and regular meetings had been maintained via virtual means. Reference was also made to the Children and Family Support Gateway and outreach work undertaken with schools to identify young carers who might not have been referred by other agencies/families for support. Officers agreed to provide further detail on that topic to Councillor Paul Penlington outside of the meeting
- the onset of Covid-19 had accelerated plans on the use of digital solutions to support new ways of working and delivering services which had secured some real improvements. The use of technology had provided positive benefits for some people which aligned more to their needs. Examples of those new ways of working for both Adult and Children's Services had been included in the report and it was an area which would continue to be developed. Whilst the new ways of working had, in the main, been received positively, it was understood and recognised that those digital interfaces did not suit everyone
- some background was provided regarding the early years pathway which was a Welsh Government initiative together with the steps taken in Denbighshire to integrate elements within the local authority remit internally during the merger of Education and Children's Services to ensure a smoother transition for families receiving support, including Flying Start. Further work was ongoing with Conwy County Borough Council in that regard and work was also ongoing regionally to share information and best practice. Councillor Ellie Chard referred to the Flying Start Programme and suggested that parents be invited into schools to spend time with their children to help them learn through play and further develop language, literacy and social skills. The Chair commended that suggestion

- officers agreed with Councillor Martyn's Holland suggestion to include within the report a glossary/index of the terms used for various projects/tools etc.
- whilst there was always a small element of re-registration of children on the child protection register it was difficult to determine whether or not the increase on the previous year had been Covid-19 related with a need to look at the individual family circumstances to ascertain the cause. In terms of safeguarding referrals Denbighshire had not seen the level of referrals increase in line with other local authorities which had been due to the work undertaken at the start of the pandemic to identify vulnerable children and devise plans to support them which had been facilitated as a result of the merged Education and Children's service
- the Mind of My Own app was explained as one of the methods used as a communication tool for capturing the views of young people on their care and support which was used by approximately 130 young people on a regular basis. Work was undertaken to identify children who might have issues accessing digital technology and funding had also been made available for that purpose
- due to the pandemic the Council became aware of carers not previously known to them with individuals coming forward for support, and work continued with partners to encourage more carers to come forward to access support and engage in services. However some individuals did not consider themselves to be carers and there was likely to be a hidden population of carers in Denbighshire who had not come forward. Work with carers had continued during the pandemic and had been one of the areas progress had been made over the last eighteen months
- social care had been under increased financial pressure as had all local government services but there was a requirement for the Council to deliver a balanced budget and make difficult decisions regarding priorities. Extra funding had been ring fenced for social care services over recent years but more could be achieved with more funding. Every department had been required to make efficiencies and in Adult and Children Social Care those efficiencies had been appropriate and offset by additional investment in sustainable services and new ways of working which it was hoped over time would bring further efficiencies. There was also a heavy reliance on grant monies and partnership funding via the Regional Partnership Board, and a challenge where funding was time limited with a need to devise exit strategies and identify how core funding could support those initiatives going forward
- reference had been made in the report to staff being stretched to breaking point and the Corporate Director elaborated upon the incredible pressure Covid-19 had placed on staff, the impact on sickness levels and support provision in place for those affected, and pointed to colleagues and residents lost during that time
- there were four Community Resources Teams (CRT) based in Prestatyn, Rhyl, Denbigh and Ruthin to align with GP clusters and health services and whilst based in those four areas their outreach covered the whole of the county. The CRT comprised both local authority and health board staff in order to provide seamless health and social care support in communities across the county
- Education and Children's Services had worked together to ensure children and young people had access to IT equipment however there was a delay in supply due to high demand and even currently there remained orders outstanding. The circumstances of families were carefully considered as part of that process and there had been a small number of cases where equipment had not been provided given the risks identified and other means of support provided.

Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts reported upon innovative ways of ensuring digital access to google classroom through an X-box and PlayStation and added that digital access had been provided to every child/home who had asked for it. There had been regular and ongoing contact with children identified as vulnerable and that approach had resulted in a lower number of safeguarding referrals against an increase experienced in other local authority areas

- the Single Point of Access (SPOA) had worked extremely well during the pandemic and was to be commended and the work of staff in undertaking volunteering roles and numerous volunteer groups was also praised
- the problems in recruitment and retaining care staff was a national issue and Denbighshire continued to undertake recruitment drives to attract new staff. Issues remained regarding fair pay, terms and conditions and reference was made to regional and national initiatives to address the issue with Denbighshire involved in the development of the National Workforce Strategy for social care and long running campaign by Social Care Wales. The Corporate Director was also part of the Ministerial Fair Care Working Group working with the Welsh Government, unions and employer representatives on fair equity for social care. Further details were provided of the redeployment process undertaken during Covid-19 moving staff into frontline care positions and other roles and at times managers who had social care experience also undertook frontline roles in care homes when there had been a shortage. All of that work had been undertaken on goodwill and the ability of staff to step in to support the most vulnerable when needed had been tremendous
- elaborated on the development of Bwthyn y Ddol in partnership with Conwy County Borough Council and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board providing short term residential support for children and young people locally. A multi-disciplinary team offered bespoke intervention led by a clinical formulation to complex high risk cases, enhancing the preventative work in the region. Reference was also made to the potential administration of the firm contracted to build the facility and work was ongoing with legal and procurement colleagues as to how best to take the project forward. Councillor Meirick Davies felt members should have been made aware of the situation at an earlier stage and Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts explained the legalities surrounding the issue but provided assurances that when further information became available and the situation was known the detail would be shared with all members
- the pandemic had been particularly difficult for adults with disabilities with some of the council's services having to cease due to Covid-19 related rules and restrictions which also included most work opportunity schemes. The Complex Disabilities Team ensured that those service users in need of support continued to receive it and contact had continued throughout. With regard to work opportunities a small team 'Job Finders' looked to find work placements and employment for people with disabilities together with opportunities within the council. Some discussions had taken place with Denbighshire Leisure Limited around opportunities to offer paid work placements and work was also ongoing with Working Denbighshire. Work was also ongoing to reopen some of the work opportunities as the Covid-19 situation allowed. Reference was made to the work opportunities review which included Meifod (Wood Products) in Denbigh which would soon be subject to a consultation process. A briefing note was being prepared thereon which would be circulated shortly in order to clarify the situation in that regard and support for service users. In terms of

accommodation for adults with disabilities, some accommodation was purpose built but adaptations were also made to properties individuals resided in

- there was an increased prevalence of mental health issues particularly within rural communities and the farming community across Wales which had been the focus of various projects and work carried out throughout the region and across all mental health services within the public sector, third sector and other organisations. A Welsh and English booklet had been specifically produced for people working in the farming community and living in rural areas around mental health support and advice and provided signposting to services. The Corporate Director agreed to provide a copy of that booklet to Councillor Meirick Davies.

At the end of debate the Chair thanked all in attendance for their valuable contributions in the comprehensive scrutiny of the annual reports. On behalf of the Committee the Chair thanked the Corporate Director Communities and staff for all the work they had undertaken during extremely difficult circumstances going above and beyond what was expected of them. The Corporate Director Communities thanked members for their continued support and appreciation of all the hard work involved and agreed to pass on the Committee's gratitude directly to staff.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information, to confirm that the reports provided a clear account of performance in 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 21.

At this juncture (11.40 am) the committee adjourned for a refreshment break.

6 SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Scrutiny Coordinator submitted a report (previously circulated) seeking members' review of the committee's work programme and providing an update on relevant issues.

Discussion focused on the following –

- reports scheduled relating to Provisional External Examinations and Teachers Assessments (September) and Verified External Examinations (January) would not be forthcoming given the lack of comparative and benchmarking data. In response to questions Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts confirmed that Denbighshire's provisional examination data could be circulated to members but there was no comparative data from other local authorities due to Welsh Government edict. However there were a number of education related matters forthcoming which would benefit from scrutiny later in the year
- it was agreed that the September meeting proceed with the item relating to Cefndy Healthcare and if possible to bring forward the report on the Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) System to that meeting which had been scheduled for November. Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts felt it would also be useful for members if the report illustrated how each individual service fed into the CRM system and the importance and benefits for each individual and service to follow the correct procedures. It was agreed that the Scrutiny Coordinator ascertain whether the service was in a position to bring the report forward to September and also to include the issues raised by Councillor Hilditch-Roberts

- members were asked to submit any proposal forms regarding topics for scrutiny (including any topics arising from the Director of Social Services Annual Reports considered earlier in the meeting) prior to the next scheduled meeting of the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Group on 9 September.

RESOLVED that, subject to the amendments agreed above, the Committee's forward work programme as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

7 FEEDBACK FROM COMMITTEE REPRESENTATIVES

Councillor Hugh Irving advised members he was the Committee's representative at the following groups/forums –

- Communities and Customers Services (Service Challenge) – unfortunately he had been unable to attend the service challenge meeting held on 14 June
- Business Improvement and Modernisation Services (Service Challenge) – the meeting held on 30 June involved much discussion on Covid-19 and recovery and it was agreed that the minutes of that meeting be circulated to members
- Queen's Building Project Board – the Board was currently meeting every two weeks in order to keep the project under close review and much discussion was confidential and could not be shared in a public meeting. Whilst the project was not without its challenges assurances were provided that everyone was working to bring the project to a successful conclusion. In considering the best way forward and how to appropriately report back to members it was suggested that the project could be a topic for future scrutiny and that the Scrutiny Coordinator take up the issue and timescales for scrutiny if considered appropriate.

Councillor Peter Scott reminded members that a special meeting of the Communities Scrutiny Committee would be held on 26 July to consider the Task and Finish Group's work on the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment.

Councillor Ellie Chard confirmed she would be representing the Committee at the Service Challenge for Education and Children's Services on 19 July and the Chair confirmed he would be representing the Committee at the Service Challenge for Community Support Services on 19 July.

RESOLVED that the verbal reports be received and noted.

At the close of the meeting the Chair thanked all present for their attendance and contributions to debate.

The meeting concluded at 12.05 pm.

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	14 October 2021
Lead Member	Councillor Bobby Feeley
Chair of the Task and Finish Group	Councillor Christine Marston
Officer	Phil Gilroy (Head of Community Support Services)
Report authors	Katie Newe (Service Manager Client Services) & Jeni Andrews (Commissioning and Planning Officer)
Title	Meifod Wood Products

1. What is the report about?

1.1. The report provides information relating to the current situation at Meifod, a recent engagement exercise with priority stakeholders, and potential options relating to the future of Meifod.

1.2. The report includes the recommendation from the Member Task & Finish Group which was set up by this Committee to consider proposals for the modernisation of in-house social care services.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

2.1. To outline the current situation at Meifod.

2.2. To make Members aware of the engagement process, details of the feedback from priority stakeholders and other information relevant to the future of Meifod.

2.3. To summarise the potential options for Members to consider.

3. What are the Recommendations?

3.1. That Members consider the issues facing Meifod.

3.2. That Members consider the feedback from those stakeholders who have taken part in the engagement exercise, in advance of a report being presented to Cabinet.

3.3. That Members consider the advantages, disadvantages and risks associated with potential options (within the context of 3.1 and 3.2) and report their views to Cabinet.

3.4. That Members especially consider the following outcome of the Member Task & Finish Group:

“Agreed: that, having considered the issues facing Meifod and the challenges around the engagement with stakeholders, along with the feedback received from those stakeholders who had taken part in the engagement exercise, as well as the advantages, disadvantages and risks associated with the potential options put forward, the Group commends to Performance Scrutiny Committee that it recommends to Cabinet that –

Meifod should be re-opened as a Council-run service, with reduced activities and new ways of working (as per Option 1 set out in Appendix 7 to the report); and work be commenced to secure an external organisation/social enterprise to provide a range of activities for people from the existing Meifod building (this may not be woodwork-based activities) with a view to exploring the long-term sustainability of Meifod (as per Option 2 set out in Appendix 7 to the report).”

4. Report details

4.1 **Background:** Meifod is a Denbighshire County Council (DCC) managed work opportunity service for adults with learning Disabilities. It is located in a factory unit in Denbigh, for which DCC pays an annual rent. Meifod has developed a good reputation for the wood products they produce and sell and by default has become a business as well as a service. However, the original aim of Meifod was to provide learning and skills development for the people who attend and the Council has, for many years, struggled to balance the competing demands of running both a business

and a service. A 2019 review of services proposed the externalisation of Meifod but work has halted due to the redeployment of Community Support Services (CSS) staff.

4.2 **Current situation:** Meifod closed at the end of March 2020 due to lockdown and staff were either re-deployed or self-isolated. Meifod has not been able to re-open. The reasons for the delay in re-opening Meifod are outlined in **appendix 1 (current issues)**. Before a decision can be made to re-open, the Council needs to consider and review the long term future for Meifod, taking into account the cost of reopening, and the increased revenue costs, along with the views of relevant stakeholders and the impact of changes. Whilst Meifod remains closed CSS are working to ensure that the individuals affected can experience other opportunities. Some individuals do not wish to return to Meifod whilst others are keen for the service to re-open.

4.3 **Engagement:** We know that a number of people have strong views about the value of the services provided from Meifod. The priority has been to engage with the people who would be most affected by any changes to the social care funded activities provided at Meifod, namely, people who attend Meifod, their families and the staff who work there or refer people there. The engagement work has proved challenging. Coordinating this work has been difficult during summer holiday period, but this engagement work could not be delayed to Autumn as this would have further delayed a decision on Meifod's future. Full details of the engagement exercise can be found in **appendix 2 – engagement**.

4.4 **Feedback from the engagement:** Families and staff have responded in different ways. In some cases, a number of surveys have been completed by different family members of the same individual. The families/carers of 12 people have chosen not to respond. 7 citizens have taken part in the face to face, online, telephone and 1:1 engagement facilitated by an independent advocacy organisation. (See **appendices 3, 4, 5a & 5b - engagement findings** for an outline of the feedback.) Taking into account the low response rates and challenges with the engagement process, the messages are that:

- Citizens who have engaged have indicated that they value Meifod and the specific nature of the work they did at Meifod. They have found it difficult to imagine aspirational alternatives around work, but have also indicated that there is not enough choice when it comes to alternatives.
- Families and Carers value Meifod for a wide range of reasons. Almost all

respondents feel it is very important for the person they care for to have a routine and to feel like they are part of a workforce with a job to do. Most feel that the type of activities on offer and the staff are very important. Some of the additional queries and concerns raised by some families indicate that a proportion of Meifod attendees have been profoundly affected physically and emotionally by not attending Meifod.

- All of the staff who have responded feel that learning new skills is very important and almost all feel that the skills of the staff and manager are very important.
- What is less clear are the reasons why some people do not want to return to Meifod.

4.5 **Future demand:** CSS needs to consider changes in the level & type of demand.

- In the 2 years prior to lockdown the number of people attending Meifod had reduced from circa 31 to circa 24 (registers from 2018 and 2020).
- The number of sessions some people attended Meifod had also been reducing. (registers from 2012 to 2020)
- Of the 24 people attending Meifod just prior to lockdown, 7 have recently stated that they no longer wish to attend Meifod and an additional 2 have said that they are nervous about returning whilst there is community transmission of Covid.
- New referrals to Meifod had significantly reduced since the introduction of the Social Services and Well-being (SSWB) Act in 2014. In response to the SSWB Act, citizens have been encouraged and supported to access community based (mainstream) activities, rather than being provided with statutory services.
- Interviews with Social Workers in 2018 showed that they were more likely to signpost citizens to non-statutory community based activities and projects. This has had an impact on all Providers – internal and external.
- Demographic change has meant that young people with severe learning disabilities & complex health needs are now more likely to survive into adulthood.
- These factors have had a direct impact on the number of people being referred, and on the needs of the individuals being referred – referral numbers have decreased, but the complexity of the needs of those people being referred have increased. All of these factors mean that the number of people requiring a service from Meifod has reduced from circa 31 people in 2018 to circa 16 people now. See **appendix 6 (Meifod citizens)**. (NB. Most also attended other services too).

4.6 **Options for the future of Meifod:** In light of the current circumstances, there are a number of options to consider in terms of the future of Meifod. **Appendix 7 (options)** provides a summary of the advantages and disadvantages of each option, along with an outline of some of the risks.

5 How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities

Supporting people with disabilities to learn new skills supports the priority to build resilience and independence

6 What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

6.1 Prior to the pandemic the annual net cost to DCC of running Meifod was circa £170,000 per annum. The gross costs of running the service were higher than this, but wood product sales of circa £64,000 helped to reduce costs. (2019/20)

6.2 Historically, Meifod, along with most other in-house work and day opportunity services, has been more expensive (per person per session) than similar external services. (estimated unit costs outlined in the 2018/19 review data).

6.3 The cost of re-opening and running Meifod will be higher than before the pandemic. There are a number of reasons for this. These include:

- Increased cost of raw materials for wood products – for example costs have increased by 157% from £1220 to £3135 for a timber pack
- Increased heating costs – estimated Heating costs during 2019/20 were circa £5,500. These costs will be up to 50% higher with a new system
- Reduced productivity and sales due to fewer people attending
- The annual rent is set to increase by £8,000 per annum to £33,000
- Fewer people attending will mean that it will cost proportionately more (per person) to provide staffing and there will be voids due to reduced demand

6.4 Individuals who live at home are being offered alternative support via other existing services. This includes additional support hours via the redeployment of commissioned staff, people who live in supported housing being supported by additional hours from the staff in their supported living setting. Some individuals have already secured activities and services in other settings and have said that they wish

to remain in their new setting. Additional hours and alternative activities are funded by CSS.

7 What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

It was important for the engagement exercise to be carried out in order to establish the possible impact of changes on priority stakeholders. Now that this first part of the engagement process has been completed, a stakeholder group is being established which will focus on the completion of the Well-being Impact Assessment (WBIA) and on what priority stakeholders have said about the impact of potential changes. (See **appendix 8** for draft terms of reference.)

8 What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

8.1 Engagement has been focused on priority stakeholders for reasons stated above.

8.2 The Member Task & Finish Group set up by the Committee to consider the modernisation of in-house care services has considered the report and their recommendation is included in Paragraph 3.4.

9 Chief Finance Officer Statement

The report clearly sets out the problems and options for the way ahead. There are a number of constraints about what can happen, such as the length of lease remaining, which means it's likely that short term increases in costs are likely.

However, there are options available which could result in reducing the financial burden in the medium term. Obviously its right to consider these options in light of the results of all the consultations and finance will be trying to work closely with the service going forward to strengthen the financial forecasts of the various options to help inform the final decision.

10 What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

10.1 The risks associated with different options for Meifod are included in **appendix 7**

10.2 Some people have strong views about Meifod. There is a risk that individuals and groups who are not priority stakeholders become the dominant voice and/or that the voice of a few is seen as the view of many. This could result in the future of the service not being shaped by those most affected or by other relevant factors. This risk has been managed by focusing the initial engagement work on gathering the views of individuals who use Meifod and their families and staff, ensuring that it is not just the views of those individuals who make repeated representations that get heard and by funding advocacy and support to help priority stakeholders to have their say. (See **risks summary in appendix 9**)

11 Power to make the decision

Scrutiny's powers with respect to this matter are set out in Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000 and Sections 7.4.1 and 7.4.2(d) of the Council's Constitution.

This page is intentionally left blank

Meifod: current issues

1. Social distancing: this is a business and at times it can be a busy industrial setting. It will be *difficult for some individuals to socially distance* and to keep some people safe whilst they are working and using equipment. This is not the case for all individuals as some have learnt about and understand the reasons for distancing.
2. Extremely clinically vulnerable citizens: Although some Meifod attendees are physically very fit, a proportion are considered to be *extremely clinically vulnerable* for the purposes of covid and might feel unsafe returning to a group activity.
3. Citizens: People have *mixed emotions about returning*. 6 out of the 24 of the people who had previously attended Meifod have started going to other places instead and don't want to return. 2 people have said they don't want to return just yet. Some people have said they want to return and some are really keen to return. For some the closure of Meifod has had a profoundly negative effect on their wellbeing.
4. Carers and families: Meifod provides valuable respite for many. Again, there are *mixed views, concerns and preferences*. Some families and carers are desperate for the person they care for to return and are understandably anxious about the impact of closure on the person they care for. Others are anxious about the person they care for returning and catching covid. For some, the person they care for has secured other services and they do not want to return to Meifod
5. Expectations: Some individuals and their families want and expect Meifod to be exactly the same as it was pre-covid – for reasons outlined in this document, this is unlikely to be feasible
6. Fewer new people wanting services: even before the pandemic the *number of people starting in Meifod each year had been reducing*.
7. Staffing: Some staff have been redeployed, some have left and there is some long term staff sickness. Work will need to be done to organize full *staffing levels*
8. Building repairs and maintenance work required: There have been ongoing issues with the building for a number of years, including problems with the heating and leaks in the roof in the office. The Council is responsible for the cost of repairs and maintenance. Despite regular maintenance checks during closure there has been water ingress, vermin infestation and heating/boiler problems. Although the water ingress and vermin have been dealt with, the heating system is a bigger problem. There is a concern with the recirculation of air. *It needs circa £6,000 - £8,000 spending on it to fix it and make it safe*. There will be higher running costs in the future. Heating costs during 2019/20 were circa £5,500. These costs will be up to 50% higher with a new system, *an increase of circa £2,750 per annum*. (Note this estimate was made prior to the current fuel supply crisis and potential fuel price increase)
9. Machinery and safety: As a wood products business, Meifod requires a range of industrial equipment, all of which needs to be maintained and regularly serviced. Servicing of the machinery has identified issues with 12 out of 13 items of machinery. *The cost of remedial work and repairs is circa £4,000*. DCC Health and Safety staff also raised concerns around the need for safety switches. Key switches and emergency foot-stops will need to be purchased. *It will also cost £10,000 for a Laser cutter*.
10. The Lease: There is a self-repairing lease - the council has to pay for *building repairs and maintenance*.
11. Rent: From 2021 DCC are required to pay an *annual rent increase of £8,000*
12. Running costs: In addition to the rent, repairs and maintenance costs, Meifod is an expensive building to run. As well as heating costs, the *electricity costs are circa £3,500*.
13. Raw materials: The cost of raw materials, particularly the wood which was imported from Sweden, has increased significantly since Meifod closed. For example, *the cost of a timber pack (to make benches) has increased from £1220 to £3135 (157% increase)*.
14. Business profits: In the past Meifod was able to produce and sell goods at a profit to help cover the high running costs. With *lower productivity and increased running and raw material costs, sales and profits will be affected and it will be more difficult for Meifod to cover its factory running costs*. This will affect long term viability. The full impact is difficult to estimate

15. Sales: keeping people safe means reduced production, which ultimately means that there will be *less to sell and less income to generate*. Meifod may need to diversify

Meifod Engagement Summary

Background. The aim of the engagement was to engage primarily with priority stakeholders, with a view to seeking their views to help inform options going forward. This would involve setting out the current circumstances and the reasons for the review, outlining the options available to DCC and asking for feedback on those options. It would also include asking people what's important to them in order to find out what it is about Meifod that people value most. CSS felt it was important to engage with people who would be most affected by any changes to the service. In order to achieve the aims and to mitigate against bias, advice and support was sought from independent teams and organisations. This advice included DCC Comms Team, DCC Engagement Officer, DCC Complex Disabilities team, DCC commissioning and contracts team, North East Wales Carers Information Service (NEWCIS) and North Wales Advice and Advocacy Association (NWAAA).

Nature and scope of the engagement:

The scope of the engagement was limited to four groups of people:

- ✓ The people who attend Meifod
- ✓ Their families
- ✓ The staff who work in Meifod
- ✓ Staff who refer people to Meifod.

The reasons for prioritising these 4 groups are outlined below in Annex A (stakeholder analysis)

The nature of the engagement was tailored to each of the groups

- *People who attend Meifod:* specialist support was made available through NWAAA advocacy services. Citizens were supported to give their views via face to face sessions and phone calls. See their report for more detailed information about the range of methods used by NWAAA
- *Families and carers of people who attend Meifod:* CSS worked with the corporate DCC Engagement Officer to design a paper and online survey aimed at asking family carers what they felt was important about Meifod, to help CSS to understand what families and carers value most about the service. The survey also asked for views on options and included space for any other information. Independent support for family carers to complete the survey via NEWCIS was arranged by CSS.
- *Staff who work in Meifod:* CSS worked with the corporate DCC Engagement Officer to design a paper and online survey aimed at asking Meifod staff what they felt was important about Meifod. The survey also asked for views on options
- *Staff who refer to Meifod:* the same survey was used for both groups of staff but with an identifier so as to show which staff worked in Meifod and which referred to Meifod.

Length and timing of consultation period: Timing was a challenge. Although not ideal to engage during the summer period, the engagement could not be deferred until after summer as this would delay the next steps. It was agreed to allow 5 weeks for completion of the survey. Due to a small number of surveys not being initially received by a small number of families, duplicates were re-sent to these individuals and the timescale for family surveys was extended to 6 weeks. NWAAA were approached in early July and held workshops in August.

The individuals/families and interested groups included in the engagement: From the outset CSS felt that the engagement needed to focus on the people who would be most affected by any changes to Meifod. Meifod exists so as to support people with learning disabilities so those individuals and their carers (for whom Meifod provides some respite) were considered to be a priority. In addition, it was recognised that staff who work in Meifod would also be affected and would also have a good understanding of what is important for the people who attend Meifod. The views and feedback from those staff with responsibility for assessing people's care and support needs (and who refer to Meifod) were deemed to be important as commissioners of the service and because they understand the duties of the Council to help meet people's care and support needs.

The risk of a wider engagement was that the voice of these priority groups could end up getting lost and not being heard because of the strong views held by others. It was also important to ensure that everyone within these groups was offered the opportunity to provide their feedback

The publicity undertaken to draw attention to the engagement: Given the focus on priority stakeholders it was important to contact these individuals directly. This was done by letter, email and phone calls. For family carers, direct information was provided via a letter to their home addresses and/or email - depending on the preferred method of each stakeholder. Some families had moved house, some did not live with the person, some wanted a different format and some did not receive the letter so further letters were sent. People who attend Meifod were sent a flier designed by NWAAA. Those who were already known to NWAAA were also contacted directly. Staff were sent an email with a link to the survey

The contents of the consultation: Please see appendices for copies of the letter/email and survey. Also final report from NWAAA in the main report

Note: This was an engagement exercise rather than a consultation exercise.

Annex A: stakeholder analysis (July 2021)

stakeholders	Importance of this groups views	How best to engage with this group
People with learning disabilities who attend Meifod	High – this is the group of people most affected	1:1 and group conversations via an independent advocate using easy read and pictorial info and questions.
Families of the people with learning disabilities who attend Meifod	High – this group may be the primary care givers. They rely on Meifod for daytime respite and also advocate for their relative	Engagement questionnaire – by post and online (as some may not be on the internet). Also with the offer of a 1:1 conversation via an independent organisation
DCC staff who work in the service	High – this group are employed to work in Meifod and their jobs will be affected	Engagement questionnaire and individual 1:1s
Cynnig	High – this group provide agency staff in Meifod	Engagement questionnaire
DCC staff who refer to the service	High – this group identify and refer people to the service and understand the needs of future Meifod attendees	Engagement questionnaire (as a team exercise in a team meeting)
Elected Members in and around Denbigh	High – this group represent local constituents	MAG and EM briefings
Elected members with relevant responsibility	High – this group have specific responsibilities	Discussion with HoS?
Learning Disability Forum	Medium – this group represent the families of people with learning disabilities, but not necessarily all will be affected	Group questionnaire at a later stage?
Advocacy Services - NWAAA	Medium – this group are the voice of people with learning disabilities locally but not necessarily all will be affected	Group discussion in SAG meeting?
Elected members and other local representatives	Med/High – this group represent their constituents	Public information via Comms team
Denbighshire based businesses suppliers to Meifod	Low/med – the council does not exist to supply benches but does need to consider and mitigate impact on local suppliers	Aim is to inform and communicate rather than engage Check if there is a local supplier list for Meifod
Public – regular customers of Meifod wood products	Low/med –selling benches is not a statutory function for DCC	Aim is to inform and communicate rather than engage Check if there is a regular customer list for Meifod
Public – local residents	Low – local residents will not be significantly affected but are likely to have strong views	Aim is to inform and communicate rather than engage?
DCC – other directorates	Low - to ensure relevant directorates kept informed	Aim is to provide information rather than engagement

Annwyl <<enw rhiant/gofalwr>>,

Rwy'n cysylltu â chi ynglŷn â Meifod, lleoliad yr oedd << enw'r unigolyn sy'n derbyn gofal >> yn ei fynychu cyn dechrau pandemig Covid-19 (y coronafeirws).

Fe gaeodd Meifod dros dro o ganlyniad i'r pandemig ac mae'n parhau ar gau ar hyn o bryd. Ers cau dros dro mae nifer o faterion wedi eu nodi sy'n golygu na allwn ailagor Meifod yn union fel yr oedd cyn hynny. Ymhlith y materion mae'r canlynol:

- Mae angen atgyweiriadau ar yr adeilad ar hyn o bryd
- Mae angen atgyweirio neu uwchraddio ychydig o'r offer i sicrhau eu bod yn cydymffurfio gyda'r canllawiau diweddaraf ar Covid-19 a chanllawiau eraill yn ymwneud ag lechyd a Diogelwch.
- Mae yna ychydig o ansicrwydd ynglŷn â'n gallu i barhau i ddarparu yr union yr un cynnyrch o ganlyniad i dueddiadau'r farchnad fyd-eang (e.e. mae pris coed wedi cynyddu'n sylweddol)

I'n helpu ni i benderfynu beth i'w wneud nesaf, fe hoffem ddeall eich safbwyntiau chi yn ymwneud â beth sy'n bwysig ynglŷn â Meifod. Fe fyddem yn ddiolchgar pe gallech gwblhau'r arolwg sydd wedi ei atodi:

Os yw'n well gennych, fe allwch gwblhau'r arolwg:

- Dros y ffôn – cysylltwch â 01824 712306 a gadewch neges a bydd rhywun yn eich ffonio yn ôl.
- Ar-lein: ewch i: [dolen i'r we]

Dear <<parent/carer name>>,

I am contacting you about Meifod, which <<cared-for person name>> had been attending prior to the beginning of the Covid-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

Meifod temporarily closed down due to the pandemic, and currently remains closed. Since temporarily closing down, a range of issues have been identified which means we cannot re-open Meifod exactly as it was before, which include:

- The building currently requires repairs
- Some of the equipment requires repairing or upgrading to make it compliant with the latest Covid-19 and other Health & Safety guidance
- There is some uncertainty about our ability to continue providing exactly the same products due to global market trends (e.g. the price of wood has increased significantly)

To help us work out what to do next, we would like to understand your views on what is important about Meifod. We would be grateful if you could complete the attached survey:

If you prefer, you can complete the survey:

- By telephone – please contact 01824 712306 and leave a message, someone will call you back.
- Online: please visit: [web link]

The deadline for all survey completions is 8th September 2021.

Y dyddiad cau ar gyfer cwblhau'r arolwg yw 8 Medi 2021.

Fe fyddwn hefyd yn trefnu sesiynau eiriolaeth annibynnol arbenigol ar gyfer y bobl a oedd yn mynychu Meifod i geisio canfod beth sydd bwysicaf iddynt. Fe fyddwn yn cysylltu â chi a <<enw'r unigolyn sy'n derbyn gofal>> ar wahân ynglŷn â'r sesiynau hynny maes o law.

Os oes gennych unrhyw ymholiadau pellach yn y cyfamser, ymatebwch i'r e-bost hwn neu ffoniwch 01824 712306.

Cofion cynnes,

Enw

Enw (CSDd Normal)

Teitl Swydd: (CSDd Normal)

We will also be arranging specialist independent advocacy sessions for the people who attended Meifod to try and find out what matters most to them. We will contact you and <<cared-for person name>> separately about those sessions in due course.

If you have any further queries in the meantime, please reply to this email or telephone 01824 712306.

Kind regards,

Name

Name (DCC Normal)

Job Title: (DCC Normal)



What does Meifod mean to you?

Hello. This survey is for parents/caregivers of people who attend Meifod

We would like to make sure you understand what is happening at Meifod right now, and why we need to have this conversation with you.

You are also welcome to complete this survey in your own time, alternatively if you would prefer to discuss what happens at Meifod with us in person please contact us via:

01824 712306 / CandCteamCSS@denbighshire.gov.uk

Privacy statement:

In this survey we will be asking you for personal information including your name and contact details, and the name of the person you care for who goes to Meifod. We will only use this information to contact you about Meifod. For more information on how Denbighshire County Council handles your personal data, please visit: www.denbighshire.gov.uk/privacy

About you

This section is for you to tell us a bit about who you are, and why Meifod is (or was) important to you, both before the Covid-19 pandemic and in the future.

Your Contact Details:

1. What is your name? _____

2: Does someone you care for, or a member of their family currently use Meifod (or used Meifod up until the start of the Covid-19 pandemic)?

Please tick one option only

Yes

No

If you answered "No" to question 2 then You have finished the questionnaire



3: What is the name of the person who Meifod supports?

4: What is your relationship to this person?

Please tick one option only

Parent

Grandparent

Sibling

Other relative
(e.g. Aunt,
Uncle,
Cousin)

Unpaid carer

Paid carer

5: Before Covid-19, on average how often did the person you care for come to Meifod?

Please tick one option only

Five days a
week

Between one
and four days
a week

Less
frequently

6: Does the person you care for want to come back to Meifod?

Please tick one option only

Yes

No

Unsure

If you answered "Yes" to question 6 then go to question 9

7: Could you tell us why they don't want to come back or why they aren't sure?

Please tick one option only

They didn't
enjoy their
time at
Meifod

They have
found an
alternative
placement

Uncertain
about the
ongoing
Covid-19
situation



8: If you would like to provide any reason(s) for your answers or let us know if there are any other reasons why the person you care for doesn't want to/is unsure about coming back to Meifod, please do so below:



9: Please tell us how much you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Please tick one option only in each row

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Unsure / no opinion
It is important for the person I care for to have a routine	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for the person I care for to have a job to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It is important for the person I care for to see their friends at Meifod	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The types of activities that Meifod offers are important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being part of a workforce is important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working specifically in a factory or similar environment is important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The staff and volunteers are important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The Meifod building itself is important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Being based in Denbigh is important to the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Having time away from home is important for the person I care for	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
The person I care for having time away from home is important for me	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



10: Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about why Meifod and the services it offers are important to you, and the person you care for?



About the future of Meifod

About the future of Meifod

The current setup of Meifod is experiencing some issues, which is why it hasn't re-opened so far. We want to make sure that we are doing the best possible thing by people who go to Meifod and their families/caregivers. Therefore we would like to take some time to explain the key issues and ask how **you** would like us to approach any potential solutions.

A summary of the issues is as follows:

- *Building repairs and maintenance work required:* There have been major issues with the building and the heating system. It needs money spending on it to fix it, change it and make it safe. There will be higher running costs in the future because of the changes needed.
- *Machinery and safety:* A review of the safe systems of working in Meifod (both in light of the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic and more generally) as well as a wider Health and Safety review have highlighted some major concerns around some of the equipment that Meifod workers use, or the way in which work is carried out at Meifod. To re-open safely we would need to potentially spend money repairing some of the machinery or making it safe, and Meifod workers would have to learn new ways of doing things.
- *The Lease:* The Council leases the building and pays an annual rent. This is a 'self-repairing lease', which means that the council have to pay for repairs to the building.
- *Social distancing:* Meifod is a busy industrial environment, with people moving around a lot. It will be difficult to socially distance and to keep people safe whilst they are working in this type of environment.
- *Some people not returning to Meifod:* Some people have told us they aren't ready to come back to Meifod or that they would prefer not to come back. We need to be sure that the services Meifod provides are appropriate and that the set-up (either now or with any changes) doesn't put people off using it.
- *Fewer new people wanting services:* even before the Covid-19 pandemic the number of people starting in Meifod each year had been reducing. Many younger adults coming through are tending to do more in their local community and are not needing services like Meifod - this has been similar for all work opportunity services. We want to be sure that the support we are offering is both needed and appropriate.
- *Sales:* keeping people safe means that we won't be able to make as many products at Meifod. The products Meifod sells are used to offset the costs of running the service, so if Meifod is selling fewer products the service will cost more to run.
- *Activities:* the activities and tasks on offer at Meifod before the Covid-19 pandemic cannot re-start exactly as they were. Some of this is to do with Covid-19 security measures, and some of this is because of other safety concerns which were raised as part of a standard review. Some activities will need to be stopped altogether, and some



activities will need to be modified in order to take place safely. This means learning how to do new things, or re-learning how to do things.

- *Externalisation*: Prior to March 2020, work was being done to see if Meifod could be externally run, rather than being run by the Council. A 'Meet the Buyer' event had been held in March 2020 to see if an external organisation wanted to take on the running of Meifod. The externalisation work temporarily stopped as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the Council is now in a position to consider looking at this again

11:

Review of the current options for Meifod

Bearing in mind all of the information we've just shared about why we're reviewing the services that Meifod provides, the Council has come up with the following proposed options:

- Re-open Meifod as a council-run service, but reduce the number and type of activities on offer and make changes to make sure that the service is Covid-secure. This includes learning new rules about social distancing and learning new ways to use some of the machinery and equipment.
- Look for an external organisation to come in and provide work-based activities in the existing Meifod building. There will still need to be some changes to the way things are run which includes learning new rules about social distancing and learning new ways to use some of the machinery and equipment
- Close Meifod and arrange new opportunities for people in other existing settings in Denbighshire.

Which is your preferred option?

Please tick one option only

Re-open Meifod as a Council-run service, with reduced activities and new ways of working

Work to secure an external organisation to provide a range of activities for people from the existing Meifod building (this may not be woodwork-based activities)

Close Meifod and support the person I care for into a placement somewhere else



12: What do you think are some advantages of your preferred option?

13: What do you think are some disadvantages of your preferred option?



Staying in touch

Staying in touch

We will be in touch to update you on Meifod as we progress things, however we would like to be sure that we have the most up-to-date contact details for you, especially if you are filling this survey in before we have had a chance to have a 1-2-1 conversation with you.

14: What's the best way for us to get hold of you?

Please tick all that apply

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Email | Telephone
call | SMS /
WhatsApp
message | Letter in the
post |

15:

Please provide your contact details in the box below

Note: If you are providing more than one method of contact, please separate these with a comma. For example:

Email address, telephone number, address

16: What is your preferred language?

Please tick one option only

- | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Welsh | English | Another
language |

16.1: please tell us you language preference

Diolch am eich amser / thank you for your time.

We will be in touch with the findings of this consultation as soon as we can.

This page is intentionally left blank

22 respondents accessed the campaign

Step 1:1.00-1:

Do you currently work at Meifod or refer people to Meifod in a professional capacity?

This single response question was answered by 22 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Yes	18	81.82%
No	4	18.18%

Step 1:3.00-1:

Do you work for...?

This single response question was answered by 14 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Denbighshire County Council, employed in the Meifod building	2	14.29%
Denbighshire County Council, referring people to Meifod	8	57.14%
An external agency or service that supports Meifod	4	28.57%

Step 1:3.01-1:please tell us who

This open response (Free text) question was answered by 4 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents
Cynnig	2
d	1
Dyffryn Care	1

Step 2:4.00-1:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(People who go to Meifod have a routine to their day)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	10	76.92%
Somewhat important	3	23.08%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-2:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(The opportunity to learn new skills)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	13	100%
Somewhat important		
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-3:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(A clear plan for progression)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	9	69.23%
Somewhat important	4	30.77%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-4:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(Agreed outcomes for their attendance)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	8	61.54%
Somewhat important	5	38.46%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		

No opinion/unsure		
<p>Step 2:4.00-5:</p> <p>As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.</p> <p>Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:</p>		
<p>(A chance for people to see their friends)</p>		
<p>This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.</p>		
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	9	69.23%
Somewhat important	4	30.77%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		
<p>Step 2:4.00-6:</p> <p>As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.</p> <p>Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:</p>		
<p>(The range of activities on offer at Meifod)</p>		
<p>This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.</p>		
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	7	53.85%
Somewhat important	6	46.15%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		
<p>Step 2:4.00-7:</p> <p>As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.</p> <p>Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:</p>		
<p>(The type of activities on offer at Meifod (currently wood working))</p>		
<p>This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.</p>		
Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	8	61.54%
Somewhat important	5	38.46%

Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-8:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(The factory/industrial environment at Meifod)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	6	46.15%
Somewhat important	2	15.38%
Neither important nor unimportant	5	38.46%
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-9:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(The skills of the manager and staff at Meifod)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	12	92.31%
Somewhat important	1	7.69%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-10:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(The location (in Denbigh))

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	8	61.54%
Somewhat important	2	15.38%
Neither important nor unimportant	3	23.08%
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-11:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(The chance for people to spend time away from home)

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	10	76.92%
Somewhat important	3	23.08%
Neither important nor unimportant		
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:4.00-12:

As someone who refers people to Meifod or helps to provide a service in Meifod, we are keen to understand what you think is most important in terms of what Meifod means to the people it is there for.

Thinking about the people who attend Meifod, how important are the following:

(Parents/caregivers can have a rest (respite))

This single response question was answered by 13 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Very important	8	61.54%
Somewhat important	4	30.77%
Neither important nor unimportant	1	7.69%
Not very important		
Not at all important		
No opinion/unsure		

Step 2:5.00-1:

Is there anything else that is important to people who go to Meifod, not on the list above?

This open response (Free text) question was answered by 6 respondents.

Response	Number of Respondents
----------	-----------------------

<p>It develops a work ethic, job satisfaction and pride as they see Meifod furniture they've made out and about in the community.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>opportunity to engage in a number of different tasks that are designed to be achievable and stimulating for there individual needs with a sense of purpose. Meifod provides a large variety of tasks designed to be achievable for the needs of the individuals, this provides a very positive session at Meifod giving a good sense of achievement and wellbeing for individuals with some very complex needs. I believe that this is a vital and unique service provided by Denbighshire that I have been heavily involved in for the past thirty years. The issues that Meifod faces with the heating have been going on for the past three years, they have not been effectively dealt with by Denbighshire to a satisfactory standard leaving the workshop on many occasions below the legal minimum limit to operate the workshop , the issue has been bought to the attention of XX over the past three years by me, it has not been adequately rectified, I find this disgraceful that Denbighshire has not dealt with this in a proper manner. There is some updating required to the existing machinery to update to current requirements in the form of lockable isolators and a DC injector on a planer machine. all machines at Meifod have an annual independent inspection and maintenance recommendations, Denbighshire have not invested in any machinery in the last thirty</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Its been described as a 'unique work opportunity' due to the woodworking tasks on offer there.</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>L</p>	<p>1</p>
<p>Satisfaction of making items and seeing these out and about in the community.</p>	<p>1</p>

Yes. Being part of a team, the feeling of pride in what they make, meeting people other than fellow work colleagues, opportunity to express opinions, feeling of being valued for their contribution, learning new skills linked to the work and aiding life skills, making new friends within the work setting leading to friendships outside of work and therefore developing individuals social circle. On a personal note as one of the Denbighshire staff at Meifod (Instructor/Supervisor) as much as having filled in this Review I personally feel that an opportunity to have a face to face (one to one) meeting to express feelings/opinions on the topic concerned would be very beneficial also.

1

This page is intentionally left blank

Meifod Wood Products Engagement Report

September 2021

Prepared by NWAAA

Introduction

NWAAA are an independent advocacy provider with expertise in public engagement with marginalised groups. We were commissioned by Denbighshire Council to design and undertake engagement sessions with members of the public with experience of using and working at Meifod Wood Products, i.e. people with learning difficulties.

Denbighshire Council asked NWAAA to find out what people thought about Meifod Wood as a service, what their thoughts are on work opportunities in Denbighshire and what their own aspirations for work might be.

NWAAA were set a timescale to undertake the work based on the local authority elected members schedule of works.

Method

NWAAA designed an accessible range of discussion tools to facilitate engagement with people with learning

disabilities and communication needs.

NWAAA initially hosted three (3) in-person engagement sessions at Hwb Denbigh between the 31st of August and September 3rd. Also offered was the possibility of in-person 1-to-1 sessions and online video sessions.

Due to low uptake, only two consultations were held (31st and August and September 2nd), with 5 participants in total. The approach was adapted to try to reach out to people who did not, or could not attend the face to face sessions arranged.

One person engaged via phone call, while another engaged via an online Zoom meeting.

The total number of participants was seven (7).

Stories, experiences and answers provided have been re-presented in this report in the context of the Social Services and Wellbeing Act's personal wellbeing outcomes as most relevant to work and occupation.

I can learn and develop to my full potential

Education and training wellbeing outcome

Through our conversations and interactions, NWAAA heard that Meifod Wood provided opportunities to develop and grow technical and complex skill-sets in a variety of roles. Due to its nature, Meifod Wood focused on carpentry and joinery skills, but people also spoke about skills such as working on deliveries, sales and supporting colleagues by making tea. Participants expressed their skill development in different ways:

"because I was most able I got good jobs", "some jobs were too dangerous, but I got help", "I was driven, doing this work"., "before I didn't have skills, now I do". One person with very complex needs who was not able to verbalise their work was able to identify incorrect use of a saw when watching a video, showing that they had knowledge and understanding of relevant work tasks.

Meifod Wood was a training environment that allowed people of varying ability to learn skills that would otherwise be unavailable to them. Participants recognized the level of skill required in order to work safely and with competence. Most people looked at the furniture produced with pride and a sense of accomplishment - *"Ask anyone, I know exactly what I'm doing ... I am motivated", "I made this...we made this table here"*

At Meifod Wood people felt trained and trusted to use machinery and do jobs that non-disabled people would do. Comments were made about being given interesting, important and skilled jobs and people clearly expressed self worth in relation to this. One person felt that they could have done more complex tasks if trusted to do so by all support staff: *"Some staff trust me and some don't, I could probably do a bit more."* Some participants also felt that there should be more work options for people with learning disabilities and that woodwork or gardening were too limited. **Page 49**

Participants asked had not given much thought to doing similar work but in a paid role.

“ When I first went there, there was a special person who taught me how to work [the machines] and I got used to those people. It was really important to me ”

*My best future?
Doing things I'm
good at*

I love to work

I can learn and develop to my full potential

Education and training well-being outcome

Point for consideration

Education and training is of vital importance to people, and many people spoke of missing working on their carpentry and joinery skills. With the regional shift to transform day service and work opportunities, it should be noted that this has, in fact, left people with learning disabilities with even fewer opportunities than they have now. These concerns reflect the worries participants shared

Potential decision makers should be aware that the 2016 Mencap Report¹ that 32% of local authorities have closed services in the preceding 3 years, with only 20% of the local authorities that have closed day-services replacing them with appropriate services.

Furthermore, the 2018 Is Wales Fairer?² report found that people with learning difficulties have the lowest employment rates of the population and that they continue to face discriminative and ill equipped work places. In the context of changing work opportunities and enabling people to reach their full potential decision makers must be aware of the potential for leaving people with learning disabilities with even fewer opportunities than they have now.



I contribute towards my social life and can be with people that I choose

Social and economic well-being

“Money is important to me because I can go to the pub with my family and I can buy myself a drink and my family (too)”

Meifod Wood produced furniture sold to both the local community and the public at large. Those that worked in the center were given an attendance payment for their work. Those individuals who attended Meifod Wood on a daily basis earned £15 per week (a rate of £3 per day).

Many participants expressed how important having an attendance payment was to them, as it showed recognition for their efforts at work and allowed them to feel that they had earnings to spend: *"It is very important to get paid"*.

£3 a day? It's not worth getting out of bed for.

However, it was also vocalized by some participants that they recognised that this money was not a proper wage and did not provide them with financial autonomy or stability to sufficiently impact their choices around hobbies or social events: *"We work very hard, and we should get more money"*. Further to that, participants also expressed concern and sympathy for those who did not receive such a payment: *"It's important to get paid, and I feel sorry for people who do not"*.

Point for consideration

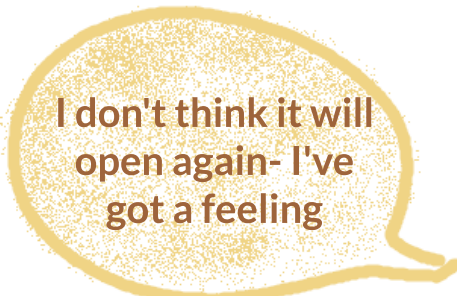
The feeling of valued employment is important to lots of people with learning disabilities and the comments from participants demonstrate this. Paid work allows for individuals to have a sense of self and dignity through financial independence. Furthermore, paid employment fosters an inclusive work agenda. With only 6% of adults with learning disabilities in paid work³, Meifod Wood offered a rare opportunity for people to earn some level of income. While this was in the form of attendance payments, multiple participants communicated that while nice to have some money in their pockets, it was short given the level of technical expertise and training that they had. It has also been stated that some people would prefer *"... to do a course and get a job with proper money"*.

I am supported to work

Participation in work

Most participants identified their place at Meifod Wood as 'work' in that they recognised that they had job specific skills, tasks to complete, colleagues, pay and

needed to adhere to work place rules like health and safety. Words like *"driven"*, *"motivated"*, *"skilled"* and *"team"* were used to describe experiences of being in Meifod. The more articulate participants could identify the difference between Meifod Wood work and the type of job a non disabled person might do. *"We work very hard, we should get more money"*, *"giving up benefits for a paid job is a risk"*, *"I've been thinking about other jobs, but not really liked them"*.



I don't think it will open again- I've got a feeling

People also talked about Meifod Wood in a non-work place context, seeing their mates, being able to choose how often they went and feeling dependent on the council for the future of Meifod, and in turn what they could do next if it closed. *"I'll try anything except gardening, but I haven't got a choice"*, *"if it opened, I'd go for one day"*.

When asked about work aspirations some people found it difficult to think of anything other than Woodlands or Meifod. Norwegian research⁵ into work inclusion for people with learning disabilities found that participants found it difficult to understand and express aspirations. This was due to limited life experience and limited opportunity to express and develop the language of "dreams and aspirations". This could account for why most people found it difficult to speculate about their future or an alternative future of Meifod Wood other than saying that they don't like change.

“It's difficult to think of other jobs because of losing benefits”

Point for consideration

In planning and developing the work landscape for people with learning disabilities in Denbighshire, it is likely that service users will need to be supported to overcome institutional experiences and world views. The North Wales Together strategy states that more people with Learning disabilities should be in paid work and research suggests that 'real jobs' combined with work opportunity placements work well for most people with learning disabilities. A blended worklife would require investment in both more traditional work opportunity services as well as supporting employers to be inclusive.

I can contribute and engage with my community

Contribution made to society

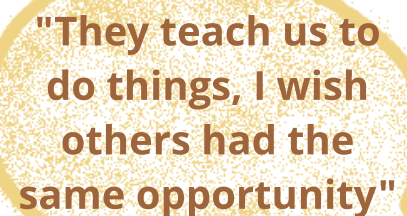
In this context participants recognised and spoke about their work community but few were able to talk about how their Meifod Wood life intersected other aspects of

community and societal life. One participant talked about having made an effort, during the Meifod closure to meet local co-workers in the pub. They were able to achieve this with those who happened to live close by. This person also described how they knew and chatted to many local pub goers who had no connection with Meifod Wood.

Some participants talked about the items they had made being sold into the community, and the value of seeing those items in gardens, or in their own homes.

They spoke about being *"happy"* and *"proud"* of the work they do, but not of the impact or value of their work at Meifod on society and community. Two people felt strongly that they need to be in work to feel active and valued; *"I was going crazy [during lockdown], I'm an outside person"*, *"ask anyone, I know exactly what I'm doing"*. One person felt a strong sense of belonging towards Meifod, and said they felt sorry for people who don't get paid for working. Most people recognised that the service that Meifod provides is good but not necessarily that they are contributing or a part of wider community through their own work, and were indifferent about whether Meifod was the best place to work.

For some participants being at Meifod was more about seeing people than doing a job, therefore Meifod was their community. Two people talked about missing the people, the banter and the laughs but not necessarily the work or the role of being a worker.



"They teach us to do things, I wish others had the same opportunity"

Point for consideration

Participant experience does not appear to include an asset based outlook, that is they did not generally see themselves as people who contribute to wider society. This is likely part of a broader identity issue for people with learning disabilities who are not often treated as people with assets by society or service providers. Well thought out day service, work and employment opportunities could contribute to a culture shift in this area.

Some participants viewed their Meifod associates as a significant part of their community, but most people did not appear to rely on Meifod for community interaction, and had wider interests and friend bases.

I have control over day-to-day life

My voice is valued and heard

“Because of lockdown I got thrown into gardening, I wouldn't have chosen that”

Many of the individuals had attended Meifod Wood for many years, one person told us they have been going for eight years. The closure of the center due to the Covid-19 pandemic has meant the loss of not just an occupation, but losing contact with their friends that many have seen on a daily basis for years. There were expressed deep emotional bonds by some participants about Meifod Wood: *"Meifod is my heart", "Meifod feels like something stuck in me, and I notice when it's not there"*.

With Meifod Wood closed, some people have occupied their time with various other activities, ranging from country walks to gardening - but in the process have lost regular connections with friends that they had seen every week for years *"Some things are ok, some things are not", "my wi-fi is terrible, so I couldn't join in with things", "I miss all me mates"*. However, many individuals felt that

they had no choice in their new activities and that their life and routine were disrupted without any input from themselves. Participants also stated that there is a strong dislike of change, with a lack of open communication often paired with feelings of concern about isolation. *"I don't think it will open again, I got a feeling, no one has been in touch", "I'd love to know what's happening"*.

Crikey, I miss people!

Point for consideration

The 2021 Welsh Government report *Locked Out, Liberating Disabled Peoples Lives*⁵ stated that that people with Learning Disabilities had experienced far greater isolation and loneliness than that of the general population. This was further compounded by a sluggish restart of day-services in the aftermath of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

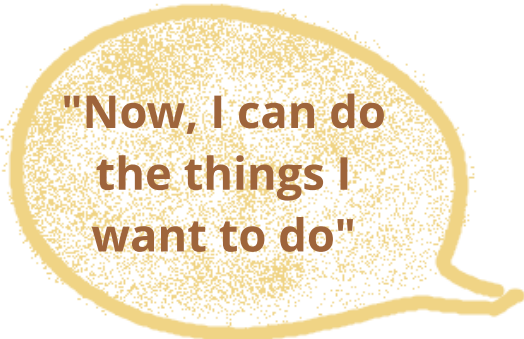
While not unique to Meifod Wood, many people who access day-services are still awaiting restarts of previous activities.

Meifod Wood was a main point of contact for many people. Its closure has been keenly felt by those who worked there to the exclusion of all other activities. Variety of service across the week is key in order to minimise potential shock from sudden change. Most participants expressed a feeling of not having a say in the future of Meifod, despite having an opinion. People seemed to feel that the lockdown closure had distanced them from having any control or influence.

I have control over day-to-day life

Pt.2

My voice is valued
and heard



**"Now, I can do
the things I
want to do"**

Some people have been vocal in that they are feeling forced to do activities that they have no interest in, with participants vocalizing that new activities have been what they wanted to do for years: *"Music is important to me, and now I can dance and that makes me happy"*

The Covid-19 Pandemic has meant that new and creative solutions for alternative activities have been offered in a social or recreational context. People have spoken about how they now have access to creative outlets that were previously not available to them. Also, many talked about how going to Woodlands was a nice change of pace, and an opportunity to regularly go outdoors without it just walking around: *"I love Woodlands!"*

Point for consideration

A person-centered focus is vital for the health and well-being for anyone who uses day-services - as stated by the North Wales Learning Disability Strategy³: an individual should have something that is meaningful and chosen by the individual. Meifod Wood was considered very much an establishment within the community for many years, which in turn seems to have created an over-reliance on it as a day-service over the years. The sharp change into new unfamiliar activities has created feelings of discomfort and upset by most participants. Communication is key in minimizing emotional and mental stress from change and fostering an environment of trust and mutual respect as expressed during our engagement.

Recognizing what people love doing and related finding vocational opportunities, as happens with the wider population where work and careers are concerned.

Closing thoughts

Meifod Wood's impact to those that worked and attended the service, as well as its impact on the wider community, was important. Over the course of the consultation it was apparent the depth of emotion and care that Meifod Wood carried with each individual we spoke with.

It is clear that the skill-sets learned in carpentry and joinery, being part of a team, working in a workshop environment are ones that individuals are immensely proud of, and recognised the role that staff played in training and supporting them. There is a real sense of camaraderie when Meifod is talked about, and on the part of almost all participants, a hope for the environment to return in some capacity, for *"the money to be spent"*.

The messages of change are similarly clear: it is deeply uncomfortable and has been often unclearly communicated. There are many instances of participants stating they have little to no choice in their new activities, and how some are unhappy with their new routine.

Service development and the impact of Covid-19 has presented an opportunity for Denbighshire Council to re-imagine the work landscaped for people with learning disabilities who are clearly saying that they want to be involved, and that they want more choice, and that many of them want more ordinary opportunities for work and employment.

This engagement process has not provided an adequate opportunity for most of the Meifod attendees to participate. It is likely this is partly due to the tight time frame and partly due to the closure having been well established already. The low participant turnout has limited the range of views and experiences that we are able to present for consideration.

While in-person participation was enlightening and engaging, other mediums offered were either refused or lacking in the level of engagement that was hoped for. As stated at the beginning of this report, only 2 individuals engaged via remote offers. Other individuals that had expressed interest in participating had no interest in talking remotely, or we were informed that an individual would be unable to actively communicate remotely.

Going forward a better planned engagement programme in line with the National Principles of Public Engagement ought to be the goal.

References

- 1. Changing Attitudes to Learning Disability** - Mencap 2016
- 2. Is Wales Fairer? The state of Equality and Human Rights in 2018**, EHRC, 2018, p36-45
- 3. North Wales Social Care and Well-Being Services Improvement Collaborative**, 2017.*North Wales Learning Disability Strategy*.
- 4. Learning Disability and Work Inclusion: on the Experiences, Aspirations and Empowerment of Sheltered Employment Workers in Norway**, Marit, Rustad & Kwesi A. Kassah, 13 April 2020, *Disability & Society* Voi.26 Issue 3.
- 5. GOV.WALES. 2021.Locked out: liberating disabled people's lives and rights in Wales beyond COVID-19** | *GOV.WALES*.

Appendix

contains photo's of discussion tools. Removed to reduce size of file

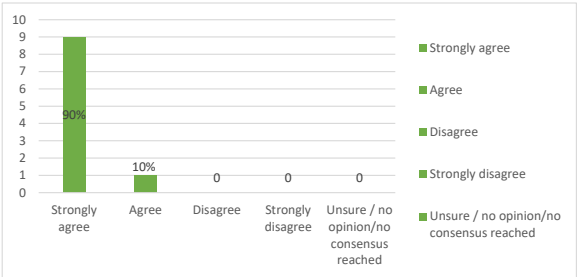
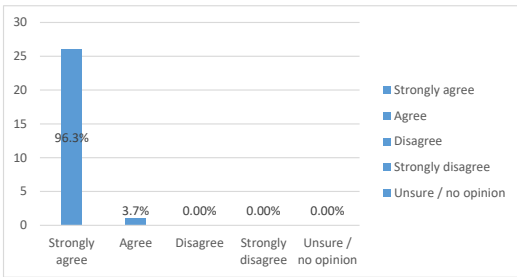
This page is intentionally left blank

Meifod Engagement Exercise Parent Carer Quantitative Data

Totals

Aggregated Responses

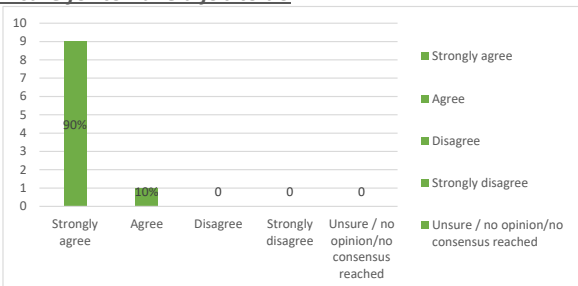
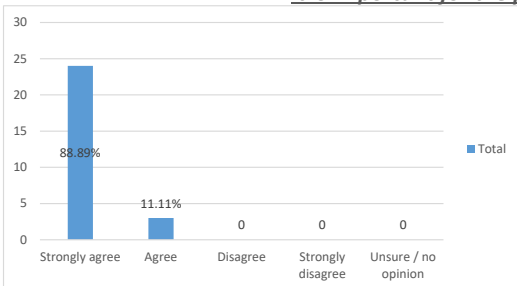
It is important for the person I care for to have a routine



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	26
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	9
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

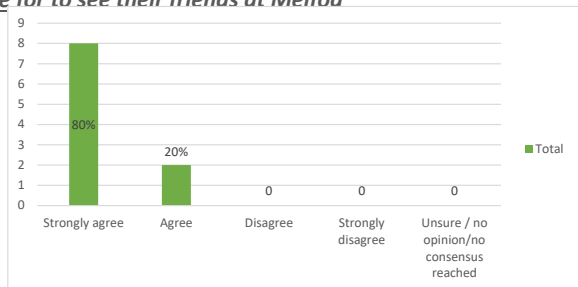
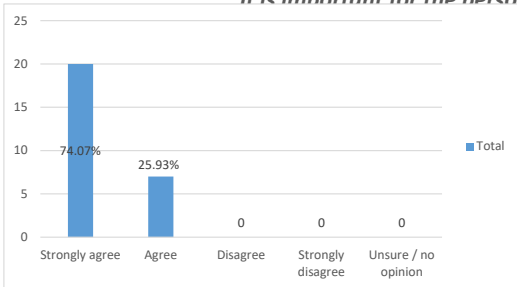
It is important for the person I care for to have a job to do



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	24
Agree	3
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	9
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

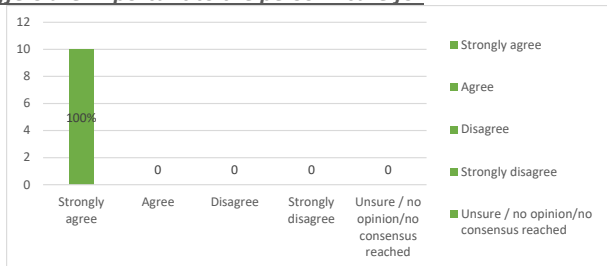
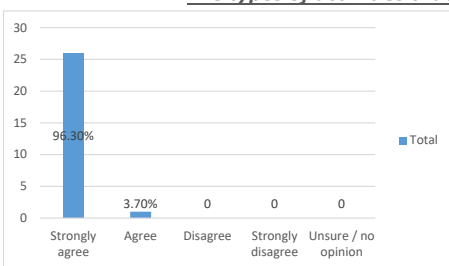
It is important for the person I care for to see their friends at Meifod



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	20
Agree	7
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	8
Agree	2
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

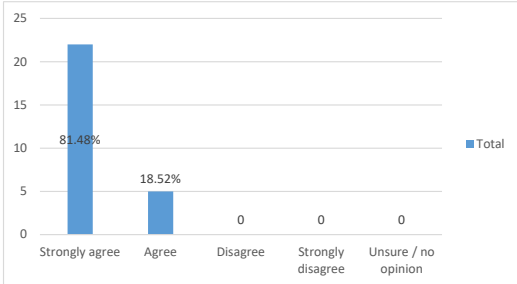
The types of activities that Meifod offers are important to the person I care for



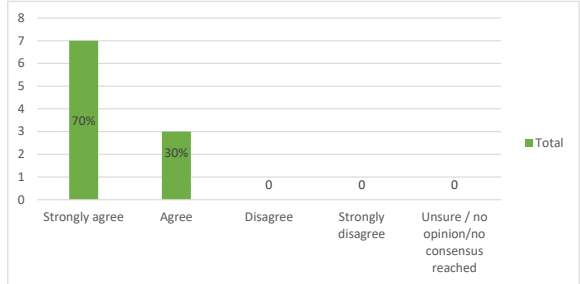
Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	26
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	10
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

Being part of a workforce is important to the person I care for

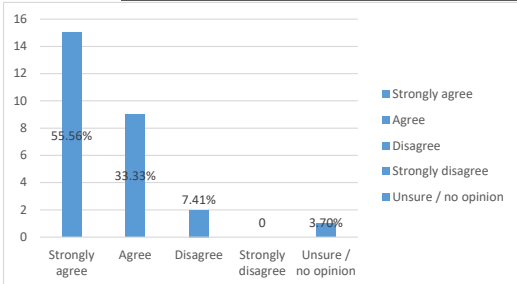


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	22
Agree	5
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

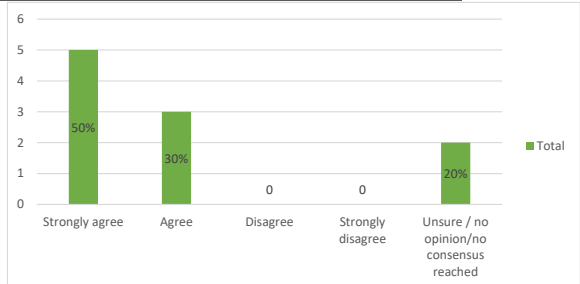


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	7
Agree	3
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

Working specifically in a factory or similar environment is important to the person I care for

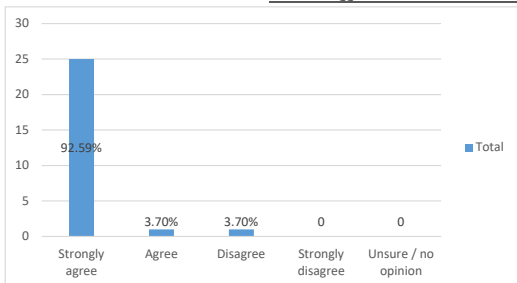


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	15
Agree	9
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	1
Grand Total	27

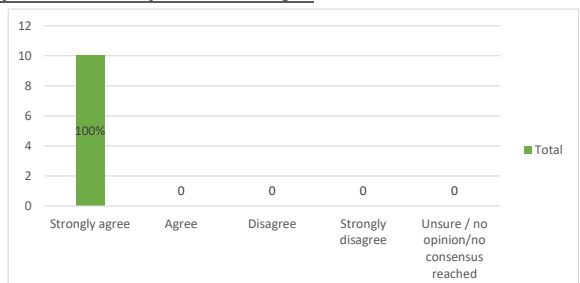


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	5
Agree	3
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	2
Grand Total	10

The staff and volunteers are important to the person I care for

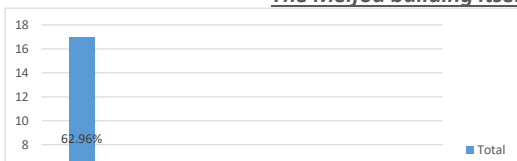


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	25
Agree	1
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	10
Agree	
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	10

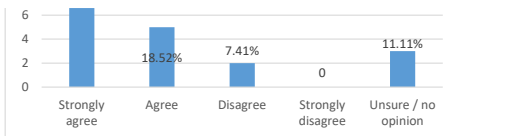
The Meifod building itself is important to the person I care for



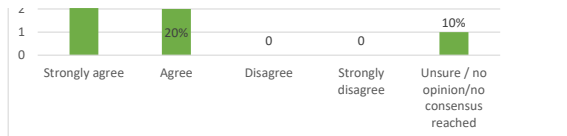
Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	17
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	18



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	7
Agree	1
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	
Grand Total	8

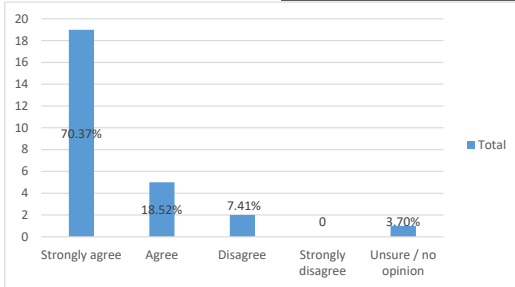


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	17
Agree	5
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	3
Grand Total	27

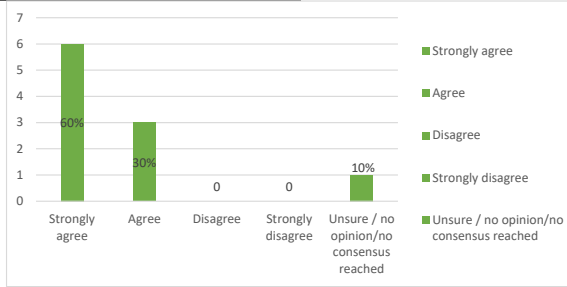


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	7
Agree	2
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	1
Grand Total	10

Being based in Denbigh is important to the person I care for

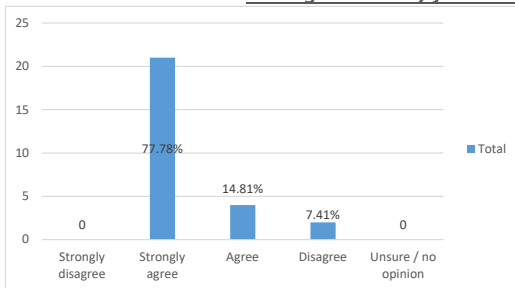


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	19
Agree	5
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	1
Grand Total	27

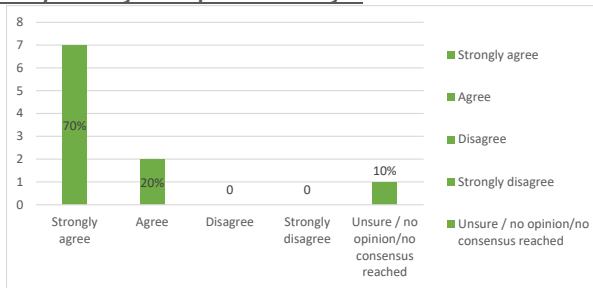


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	6
Agree	3
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	1
Grand Total	10

Having time away from home is important for the person I care for

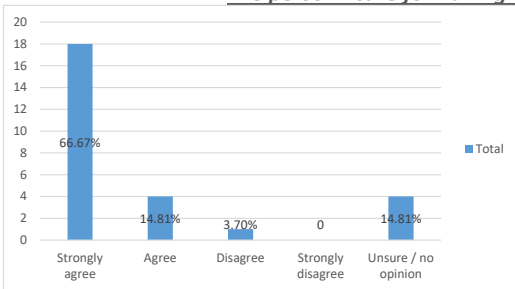


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly disagree	
Strongly agree	21
Agree	4
Disagree	2
Unsure / no opinion	
Grand Total	27

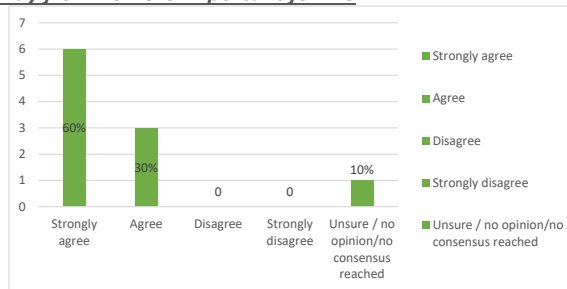


Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	7
Agree	2
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	1
Grand Total	10

The person I care for having time away from home is important for me



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	18
Agree	4
Disagree	1
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion	4
Grand Total	27



Row Labels	Sum
Strongly agree	6
Agree	3
Disagree	
Strongly disagree	
Unsure / no opinion/no consensus reached	1
Grand Total	10

This page is intentionally left blank

Meifod Qualitative Analysis.

This document is intended to provide an overview of the themes identified from analysis of the emails and survey responses from families and carers. Also included are some quotes around the options presented as part of the engagement

1. Themes from the free text around what is important to (& for) people

Theme	Recurrence	Notes
Continuity, stability, familiarity, trust	5	
Sense of achievement, pride	9	This was quoted as being really important to people – making and selling products and seeing those products being used in the local community
Mental health/emotional wellbeing	8	Some responders were concerned about the impact of closure on mental and emotional well-being
Friendships, companionship, relationships, social life	9	
Work - the products, usefulness, quality and variety of	4	
Work – part/sense of identity	4	E.g. workwear, having particular things they're the boss for
Physical wellbeing/abilities	6	
Routine and structure	7	
Learning new skills	4	
challenging behaviours	3	
Impact on carers, lack of respite, carer wellbeing,	6	
Motivation, purpose, something to look forward to	6	
Designed to meet LD needs, inclusive, safety	5	
Keeping occupied	2	Separate from work identity/sense of purpose, more about having something to do
Quality of products from consumer perspective	2	
Good staff	3	Skills, understanding, experienced etc.
Citizen confidence and independence, outgoing	5	
Work experience	1	
Building – good layout and atmosphere	1	
wages	1	

2. Quotes around the options presented (and other useful comments)

- A venture along the lines of Woodland Skills in Aberwheeler would provide a more efficient service [sic]
- An external organisation may prioritise financial gain and may not offer the same level of support. I feel it is important for service users to be a part of the workforce but acknowledge they will commonly find it impossible to carry out duties within a timeframe to meet the needs of external employers.
- There is no commercial pressures for individuals to work to specific job timescales which allows for personal development without undue pressure.
- My son doesn't like change and a new company may not be accepted by the people attending. The Council have run it really well and I trust them.
- XX has been supported by the staff at Meifod for many years and knows and trusts them well, XX know which member of staff to go to if she was in need of some assistance.
- Keeping Meifod as a Council run unit will ensure that there is local support & understanding for the needs of the clients.
- I am conflicted in my decision, as option 1 is also a preference. However, if an external organisation can provide or introduce a new set of activities/skills, I believe XX could benefit.
- The range of products should be expanded to provide additional funding that can be used to support the facility.
- I can just imagine my son's face if he thought he was returning to Meifod as it was before, only to find out that it was now, for instance, a recycling facility.
- I have tick the Council run service, but an external run organisation could do the same as long a minimum fixed term of say 5 years is included in their service provision?
- The actual woodwork is not the factor that provides the positive impact in the people supported lives.
- Maybe the staff, families and service users could meet to discuss new ways of working or alternative, smaller products.
- They are not looking for the results of 'reduced activities' at Meifod and they are certainly not looking for closure.
- Three options are presented at the end of the survey. I suggest a 4th is needed, i.e., Re-open Meifod as a council-run service, but with improvements to the facilities and some modernisation which could lead to the expansion and improvement of current services.

Appendix 6

MEIFOD person	sessions										notes 2020	Notes 2021 - intentions and alternatives
	3rd February 2020											
	Mon AM	Mon PM	Tue AM	Tue PM	Wed AM	Wed PM	Thu AM	Thu PM	Fri AM	Fri PM		
1	1	1					1	1	1	1	wants to return asap	wants to return asap. Doing 3 days at Woodlands in the interim
2	1		1								not returning	not returning
3					1	1	1	1			not returning	not returning
4	1	1			1	1					desp to get back going insane	wants to return
5			1	1					1	1	not returning at this time due to health	concern re health and covid
6	1	1	1	1	GG	GG	1	1			possibly drop meifod but attend GG only due to dementia	not returning
7			1	1	1	1					not returning	Not returning
8							1	1			not open to cdt	not known to DCC complex disabilities team
9	1	1	1	1	GG	GG	1	1			continue possible transport issues needs to clarify transport policy	Would like to return on fewer days. PCP review due. Looking at Y Bont alternatives.
10			1	1							continue possible transport issues	Would like to return to Meifod. Had additional day on farm to replace.
11	1		1	1						1	wants to return asap	Not saying yes or no to Meifod at the moment. Going to Garden Control. Said no to woodlands due to costs of transport.
12					1	1			1	1	res care not returning at this time	Advanced dementia. Not clear how he would manage. Has hand over hand support with simple tasks so unlikely to be appropriate.
13			1	1			1	1			can attend independantly	wants to return
14		1	1	1			1	1			continue possibly walk to placement	Yes. Was starting back at Coop.
15	1	1					1	1			res care not returning at this time	Yes. In meantime has Woodlands at flexible hours with Cooptions.
16					1	1					need to follow up if attending as he did not want to.	does not want to return - was unhappy before closure
17									1	1	would like to return from September	wants to return - info from survey response indicates this
18					1	1					prefer to return to popty first	unable to clarify
19		1		1		1		1		1	not open to cdt	Not known to DCC complex disabilities team (out of county resident).
20	1	1	1				1	1			not returning	Survey response says he wants to return
21					1	1	1	1			mum would say this is his first choice	defo wants to return according to info from mother
22									1		look at another type of activiy using community navigator	unable to clarify
23	1				1						not returning at present	Yes. Would like to go back but issues with finding support as he is 1 to 1
24	1					1					shielding until 16th, return not confirmed, agency talking with mum	Yes
25	1	1					1	1			looking at options with family	unable to clarify

This page is intentionally left blank

Meifod Options

option	advantages	disadvantages	risks
<p>1. Re-open Meifod as a Council-run service, with reduced activities and new ways of working</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>a. Attendee numbers would be reduced by at least 25% as some individuals don't intend to return</p> <p>b. Activities need to change to respond to covid, timber costs and Health and Safety advice</p> <p>c. Meifod Staff are currently either deployed, off sick or have left the service</p>	<p>a. Popular in the survey - This is the most popular option given in the survey responses and in email enquiries and concerns</p> <p>b. Consistency and familiarity - Existing attendees who wish to return are familiar with the setting, the nature of the work, their co-workers and the staff</p> <p>c. Building commitment - This option still makes use of a building on which DCC has a lease and rental commitment</p> <p>d. Timescale for re-opening - Compared to option 2 it should be relatively quick to re-open and to re-establish some sort of a service (although see c in the notes re staffing)</p>	<p>a. Expectations – This service will not be the same as pre-covid due to reduced numbers and activities</p> <p>b. Capital costs to DCC - Investment will be needed to make the setting and the activities safe and usable</p> <p>c. Revenue (unit costs) to DCC – Meifod had relatively high unit costs (compared to external services) and these will be higher post covid due to a number of factors</p> <p>d. Recommendations from the review – Attempting to keep Meifod as much as it was pre-covid could be perceived as a missed opportunity for change and modernisation</p> <p>e. Sustainability – given the relatively high cost of this service and the lack of new referrals maintaining the service (and the wood products business) may not be sustainable in the long term</p>	<p>a. Costs to DCC - The precise net costs associated with re-opening and running the service are difficult to anticipate and there is a risk that unit costs will be exceptionally high</p> <p>b. Business failure - There is a risk that the 'business' arm will no longer make a net profit.</p> <p>c. H&S - The post covid health and safety risks for each individual are difficult to fully anticipate</p> <p>d. Views of some being seen as view of all - It has been difficult to get the views of all priority stakeholders – there is a risk that this is misconceived as the most popular option</p>

option	advantages	disadvantages	risks
<p>2. Work to secure an external organisation to provide a range of activities for people from the existing Meifod building (this may not be woodwork-based activities)</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>a. DCC would need to clarify the terms of the lease re the kinds of activity that can be done within the building and would need to negotiate with a new provider for an offset for the rent costs and building usage</p> <p>b. DCC have already been approached by a social enterpriser with an interest in providing alternative work opportunities from the building</p> <p>c. DCC could invite expressions of interest from providers with a detailed service specification outlining what is needed for citizens</p>	<p>a. Approach - Fits with previously agreed externalisation approach set out in the review</p> <p>b. Building commitment - Still makes use of a building that DCC has a lease on</p> <p>c. New opportunities - Potentially provides alternative activities for people</p> <p>d. Some consistency and familiarity - Individuals already know the building and some of the other attendees</p> <p>e. Personalisation - Externalisation is a chance to re-set the vision and to coproduce a spec with citizens</p> <p>f. Control - DCC would retain control over who provides a service and the type of activity from the building</p>	<p>a. Change – some people might struggle with a change in activities & routine</p> <p>b. Opposition – some citizens, families and staff will be opposed to a change in activity</p> <p>c. Impact on Denbigh - Loss of a well-established and popular business in Denbigh.</p> <p>d. Capital costs - Investment still needed to make the setting usable</p> <p>e. Revenue (unit costs) to DCC - Difficult to anticipate and may still incur high running costs for the building</p> <p>f. Timescale – it could take time to secure a new provider and to establish a new service. People will need something in the interim</p>	<p>a. Lack of interest from other providers (eg due to TUPE liabilities)</p> <p>b. Stakeholder resistance to a change in provider</p> <p>c. could be costly for DCC - Would need to agree terms for occupation, which could be a complex process</p> <p>d. Risk of reverting to option 1 due to above risks</p>

option	advantages	disadvantages	risks
<p>3. Close Meifod and support people in placements elsewhere</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>a. DCC would need to secure alternative provision for each person. (NB 6 people have already secured other activities)</p> <p>b. Meifod Staff would need to be re-deployed or face redundancy</p> <p>c. The Cynnig contract would need to be reviewed</p> <p>d. Could seek a sub-tenant for the building (not related to work opps provision)</p>	<p>a. Choice - An opportunity to develop or commission something new and to use the resource wheel to identify alternatives for people</p> <p>b. Cost – Most other similar services are cheaper than Meifod</p>	<p>c. Unpopular in the survey – those who responded were not supportive of this option</p> <p>d. Choice - Limited capacity of existing settings to provide support to Meifod attendees results in reduced choice for people. Survey responses indicate that people value the nature of the work at Meifod</p> <p>e. Cost - Potential cost to DCC of ending the lease early without a replacement use for the building (financial and reputational)</p> <p>f. Timescales – it would be difficult to identify and secure appropriate alternatives and to help people to cope with the change within a short timescale</p>	<p>a. Lack of options for people - Other providers do not have capacity to offer places to Meifod attendees</p> <p>b. Resistance to closure - some people and families might struggle to consider alternatives</p> <p>c. Judicial review if due process not followed</p> <p>d. Reputational damage – due to vocal resistance from some and also lease costs/early surrender costs still being incurred</p>

option	advantages	disadvantages	risks
<p>4. VARIATION OPTION Re-open Meifod as a time limited service. Develop a progression plan for each individual (max 4 years linked to the lease ending).</p> <p>Notes</p> <p>a. This option has been identified in response to some of the feedback from citizens and families – immediate closure would be difficult for some to cope with, but this option allows for a planned approach to the future DCC would need to work with each individual to identify their preferred next steps</p> <p>c. New services or activities would be commissioned within 4 years in response to collated information from the individual progression plans</p>	<p>a. Consistency and familiarity - Existing attendees who wish to return are familiar with Meifod and it allows time to prepare people for change at a pace that suits them</p> <p>b. Building commitment - This option still makes use of a building on which DCC has a lease and rental commitment</p> <p>c. Timescale for re-opening - Compared to option 2 it should be relatively quick to re-open and to re-establish some sort of a service for a time limited period.</p> <p>d. Market – allows time to develop, support or commission alternative activities/services locally</p> <p>e. Choice – allows time to identify and secure appropriate alternative options for each individual and to consider new services - where people want to stay together for example</p> <p>f. Sustainability – enables sustainable options to be developed</p> <p>g. Approach – fits with the externalisation and progression focused approaches</p>	<p>a. No engagement on this option - This wasn't set out in the options presented to stakeholders so hasn't been considered by others</p> <p>b. More detail required - This option would need firming up (perhaps with key stakeholders)</p> <p>c. Costs - See disadvantages (a, b and c) set out in option 1 (although these would be short term with this option as the plan would be to develop alternatives within 4 years)</p> <p>d. Duplication costs - This could be a more expensive option in the short to medium term, whilst/if people are moving on to other activities in a phased way as there could be duplicate costs (i.e. Continuing to run Meifod and purchasing new placements)</p>	<p>a. Costs to DCC - The precise net costs associated with re-opening and running the service even just for 4 years are difficult to anticipate and there is a risk that unit costs will be exceptionally high</p> <p>b. Business failure - There is a risk that the Meifod 'business' arm will no longer make a net profit in this period</p> <p>c. H&S - The post covid health and safety risks for each individual in Meifod are difficult to fully anticipate</p> <p>d. Risk of progression plans not happening within the agreed timeframe and no alternatives established before the lease ends</p>

Meifod Reference Group (2021)

1. Background: Meifod is a DCC managed work opportunity service for adults with learning Disabilities. People attend the service so as to experience a work based environment and to learn new skills as part of their individual care and support plan. Meifod has developed a good reputation for the wood products they produce and sell and by default has become a business as well as a service. However, the original aim of Meifod was not to run as a business but to provide learning and skills development for the people who attend and the Council has, for many years, struggled to balance the competing demands of running both a business and a service.

2. Why is the group needed? (reason for setting up the group)

A 2019 review of services proposed the externalization of Meifod. A 'Meet The Buyer' event was held in March 2020, but work has halted due to the redeployment of CSS staff to covid work. Meifod closed at the end of March 2020 due to lockdown. All Meifod staff were either re-deployed or self-isolated. Meifod has not been able to re-open. Before a decision can be made to re-open, the Council need to consider and review the long term future for Meifod. This group is being established to ensure that the next steps for Meifod are informed by views, experiences and perspectives from a range of stakeholders.

3. What will the group do? (responsibilities)

The group is being established to contribute to the Wellbeing Impact Assessment that will be completed as CSS develop the plans for Meifod by:

- a. looking at what people have said they value about Meifod
- b. considering different options in terms of future support and services for people who attend Meifod from the perspective of the individuals they are there to represent
- c. exploring the advantages and disadvantages of the possible options from a range of perspectives and within the context of the current issues facing Meifod
- d. Considering the impact of future changes

4. Who will be on the group? (Membership)

The group will include the following representatives:

- 2 x Citizens and their self-advocate
- 2 x Family/Carer of people who attend Meifod
- 1 x Parent Carer Forum rep
- 1 x Elected Member (LD Champion)
- 1 x Complex Disability team rep
- 1 x Commissioning rep
- 1 x Contracts rep (on an as and when basis, when required, for advice)
- 1 x Meifod staff rep

- 1 x CSS Service Manager

If a representative is unable to attend he/she should, wherever possible, nominate an alternative representative to attend in their place.

5. Where? (location for meetings)

- The group will meet on Teams.
- The meetings will be recorded for the purposes of note taking. Recordings will be deleted once the notes have been agreed by the group.
- Where safe and appropriate, and by the agreement of all members, the group may choose to meet face to face

6. When? (frequency and timing of meetings)

- ✓ The group will meet at least 4 weekly.
- ✓ This may be more often when required.
- ✓ The Group will mutually agree days and times

7. Other things

- a. Chairing the meeting – the group will be chaired by CSS service Manager, and deputy chair will be Contracts and Commissioning Manager
- b. Conflicts of interest – Conflicts of interest will be declared at the beginning of each meeting. The chair will make the decision as to whether any conflict declared warrants exclusion from all or part of the meeting.
- c. Confidentiality and Data sharing – The names and personal details of citizens should not be shared unless with informed consent
- d. Coordination and administration – meetings will be arranged and minuted by Denbighshire CSS.

Date: September 2021

Reviewing services at Meifod – what are the most significant risks and how do we respond to them?

Risk No.	Description	RAG status	Risk Management Response and actions
1	Reviewing services means that Meifod attendees are left lonely or unsupported	Red	Deploy support or offer alternative services and activities
2	Reviewing services makes people anxious or causes alarm which results in resistance	Yellow	Provide information and reassurance to priority stakeholders and others
3	The people who are most affected don't get to have a voice	Red	Arrange advocacy and use accessible engagement methods
4	Misinformation on social media increases alarm and anxiety	Yellow	Release regular press releases and involve communications team
5	The building falls into disrepair whilst closed	Yellow	Regular building checks
6	Some people find alternative services or support and don't want to return	Green	Monitor changes so as to keep track of future demand for services
7	Negative press results in reputational damage	Yellow	Press releases and support from communications team
8	Poor engagement from priority stakeholders	Yellow	Use a range of accessible engagement methods
9	Priority stakeholders are not kept informed	Yellow	Provide regular updates specifically for priority stakeholders
10	Deployment to covid related work delays the review	Red	Monitor and manage capacity
11	Feedback is inconclusive	Yellow	Ensure that engagement questions are focused on info required
12	Pressure from non priority stakeholders affects decision making	Yellow	Prioritisation of stakeholder feedback to inform next steps

Reviewing services at Meifod – what are the most significant risks and how do we respond to them?

13	Alternatives are not feasible		Be realistic with options
----	-------------------------------	--	---------------------------

Key to RAG status

Almost certain	A					
Likely	B					
Possible	C					
Unlikely	D					
Rare	E					
		5	4	3	2	1
		Very low	Low	Medium	High	Very high

Reviewing services at Meifod – what are the most significant risks and how do we respond to them?

Other risks to take into account when considering Meifod options

Risk title	Risk description	mitigation
Lease commitment	CSS is committed to a further 4 years on the lease.	Re-assignment of the lease could be considered
Rent increase	The landlord has requested a significant rent increase	negotiation
Reduced sales	Net profit from sales has helped to reduce unit cost of Meifod service provision. Lower productivity will have an impact on sales which in turn will impact on unit costs to DCC of service provision	diversify
Reduced attendance	Lower attendance could have an impact on unit cost to DCC of service provision and may also impact on citizen experience	Adjust staffing levels (although this won't compensate as building costs cannot be adjusted)
Increased cost of raw material	Increased cost of wood will impact on profits and sales which in turn will impact on unit costs to DCC of service provision	Source alternative materials and/or diversify

See additional health and safety risk assessment for outline of H&S risks associated with re-opening

This page is intentionally left blank

Report to	Performance Scrutiny Committee
Date of meeting	14 October 2021
Lead Officer	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Report author	Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Co-ordinator
Title	Scrutiny Work Programme

1. What is the report about?

The report seeks Performance Scrutiny Committee to review its draft forward work programme. In doing so the Committee is asked to reflect on the implications of the focus on business critical operations during the emergency phase of the COVID -19 pandemic and the programmes of work underway or being planned under the recovery phase, whilst also having regard to items of business already on its forward work programme prior to the pandemic.

2. What is the reason for making this report?

To seek the Committee to review and agree on its programme of future work, and to update members on relevant issues.

3. What are the Recommendations?

That the Committee

- 3.1 considers the information provided and approves, revises or amends its forward work programme as it deems appropriate; and
- 3.2 determines whether any key messages or themes from the current meeting should be publicised via the press and/or social media.

4. Report details

- 4.1 Section 7 of Denbighshire County Council's Constitution sets out each Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference, functions and membership, as well as the rules of procedure and debate.
- 4.2 The Constitution stipulates that the Council's scrutiny committees must set, and regularly review, a programme for their future work. By reviewing and prioritising issues, members are able to ensure that the work programme delivers a member-led agenda.
- 4.3 For a number of years it has been an adopted practice in Denbighshire for scrutiny committees to limit the number of reports considered at any one meeting to a maximum of four plus the Committee's own work programme report. The aim of this approach is to facilitate detailed and effective debate on each topic.
- 4.4 In recent years the Welsh Government (WG) and Audit Wales (AW) have highlighted the need to strengthen scrutiny's role across local government and public services in Wales, including utilising scrutiny as a means of engaging with residents and service-users. From now on scrutiny will be expected to engage better and more frequently with the public with a view to securing better decisions which ultimately lead to better outcomes for citizens. AW will measure scrutiny's effectiveness in fulfilling these expectations.
- 4.5 Having regard to the national vision for scrutiny whilst at the same time focussing on local priorities, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) recommended that the Council's scrutiny committees should, when deciding on their work programmes, focus on the following key areas:
- budget savings;
 - achievement of the Corporate Plan objectives (with particular emphasis on their deliverability during a period of financial austerity);
 - any other items agreed by the Scrutiny Committee (or the SCVCG) as high priority (based on the PAPER test criteria – see reverse side of the 'Member Proposal Form' at Appendix 2);

- Urgent, unforeseen or high priority issues; and
- Supporting the Council's recovery work in relation to the effects of the COVID-19 crisis on Council services, the local economy and the county's communities

4.6 Scrutiny Proposal Forms

As mentioned in paragraph 4.2 above the Council's Constitution requires scrutiny committees to prepare and keep under review a programme for their future work. To assist the process of prioritising reports, if officers are of the view that a subject merits time for discussion on the Committee's business agenda they have to formally request the Committee to consider receiving a report on that topic. This is done via the submission of a 'proposal form' which clarifies the purpose, importance and potential outcomes of suggested subjects. No officer proposal forms have been received for consideration at the current meeting.

- 4.7 With a view to making better use of scrutiny's time by focussing committees' resources on detailed examination of subjects, adding value through the decision-making process and securing better outcomes for residents, the SCVCG decided that members, as well as officers, should complete 'scrutiny proposal forms' outlining the reasons why they think a particular subject would benefit from scrutiny's input. A copy of the 'member's proposal form' can be seen at Appendix 2. The reverse side of this form contains a flowchart listing questions which members should consider when proposing an item for scrutiny, and which committees should ask when determining a topic's suitability for inclusion on a scrutiny forward work programme. If, having followed this process, a topic is not deemed suitable for formal examination by a scrutiny committee, alternative channels for sharing the information or examining the matter can be considered e.g. the provision of an 'information report', or if the matter is of a very local nature examination by the relevant Member Area Group (MAG). No items should be included on a forward work programme without a 'scrutiny proposal form' being completed and accepted for inclusion by the Committee or the SCVCG. Assistance with their completion is available from the Scrutiny Co-ordinator.

Meifod

- 4.8 Following the conclusion of the stakeholder engagement exercise on the future delivery of work opportunities services until recently delivered at Meifod, the Chair agreed that the Task and Finish Group's findings and recommendations be presented to this Committee at the current meeting.

Cabinet Forward Work Programme

- 4.9 When determining their programme of future work it is useful for scrutiny committees to have regard to Cabinet's scheduled programme of work. For this purpose, a copy of the Cabinet's forward work programme is attached at Appendix 3.

Progress on Committee Resolutions

- 4.10 A table summarising recent Committee resolutions and advising members on progress with their implementation is attached at Appendix 4 to this report.

5. Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group

Under the Council's scrutiny arrangements, the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group (SCVCG) performs the role of a coordinating committee. The Group met on 9 September 2021. The following topics were referred from the Group to this Committee for consideration:

- Staff Absences and Turnover in Denbighshire during 2020/21 & 2021/22 and its impact on Customer Service
- Progress and future plans on reduction of single use plastics and carbon reduction in the School Meals Service

Both items have been scheduled for presentation to the Committee at its meeting in January 2022 (see Appendix 1).

The Group's scheduled to hold its next meeting on the 25 November 2021.

6. How does the decision contribute to the Corporate Priorities?

Effective scrutiny will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities in line with community needs and residents' wishes. Continual development and review of a coordinated work programme will assist the Council to deliver its corporate priorities, improve outcomes for residents whilst also managing austere budget and resource pressures.

7. What will it cost and how will it affect other services?

Services may need to allocate officer time to assist the Committee with the activities identified in the forward work programme, and with any actions that may result following consideration of those items.

8. What are the main conclusions of the Well-being Impact Assessment?

A Well-being Impact Assessment has not been undertaken in relation to the purpose or contents of this report. However, Scrutiny's through it work in examining service delivery, policies, procedures and proposals will consider their impact or potential impact on the sustainable development principle and the well-being goals stipulated in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

9. What consultations have been carried out with Scrutiny and others?

None required for this report. However, the report itself and the consideration of the forward work programme represent a consultation process with the Committee with respect to its programme of future work.

10. What risks are there and is there anything we can do to reduce them?

No risks have been identified with respect to the consideration of the Committee's forward work programme. However, by regularly reviewing its forward work programme the Committee can ensure that areas of risk are considered and examined as and when they are identified, and recommendations are made with a view to addressing those risks.

11. Power to make the decision

11.1 Section 21 of the Local Government Act 2000.

11.2 Section 7.11 of the Council's Constitution stipulates that scrutiny committees and/or the Scrutiny Chairs and Vice-Chairs Group will be responsible for setting their own work programmes, taking into account the wishes of Members of the Committee who are not members of the largest political group on the Council.

Contact Officer:

Rhian Evans, Scrutiny Coordinator

Tel No: (01824) 712554

e-mail: rhian.evans@denbighshire.gov.uk

Note: Any items entered in italics have not been approved for inclusion at the meeting shown by the Committee. Such reports are listed here for information, pending formal approval.

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
25 November	Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill	1. Corporate Risk Register	To consider the latest version of the Council's Corporate Risk Register and risk appetite statement	Effective monitoring and management of identified risk to reduce risks to residents and the Authority	Alan Smith/Iolo McGregor/Emma Horan	November 2020
	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	2. Customer Relationship Manager (CRM) System (tbc)	To review (i) the implementation of the new CRM/360 system and its performance in delivering efficient and effective customer focussed services in line with the product specification and the Council's expectations; (ii) service demand in terms of supporting recovery from COVID-19 by moving requests on to C360; and (iii) how services and their individual systems link into C360	An efficient and effective customer enquiries system that deals with enquiries quickly, to a high level of customer satisfaction, whilst realising value for money for the Authority	Liz Grieve/Ffion Angharad	September 2018 (rescheduled November 2019/rescheduled again March/Oct 2020 & January 2021 due to COVID-19)
	Cllr. Julian Thompson-Hill	3. Corporate Plan (Q2) 2021/22	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017-22	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets to deliver its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/Iolo McGregor/Heidi Barton-Price	March 2021
	Cllr. Brian Jones	4. Draft Sustainable Travel Plan	To consider the draft sustainable travel plan (including the Council's role in facilitating the locating of vehicle charging points across the county, its work with other local authorities and stakeholders with	To provide observations and recommendations that will support the delivery of the corporate priorities relating to the environment and connected communities by	Emlyn Jones/Mike Jones	By SCVCG June 2018 (rescheduled February

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			respect of their availability and in relation to other potential alternative travel modes, and in supporting the community to switch to sustainable fuels)	reducing CO2 emissions and improving travel connectivity		& November 2019, October 2020 & June 2021 due to COVID-19)
27 January 2022	Cllrs. Tony Thomas/ Bobby Feeley	1. <i>Denbighshire's Housing and Homelessness Strategy Action Plan</i>	<i>To examine the progress made to date in delivering the revised Strategy and Action Plan approved by County Council in December 2020</i>	<i>The identification of actions that will support and ensure the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities relating to Housing, Environment, Young People and Resilient Communities and ultimately the Corporate Plan</i>	<i>Emlyn Jones/ Angela Loftus</i>	<i>By SCVCG January 2021</i>
	Cllr. Tony Thomas	2. Library Service Standards 2020-21	To consider the results of the WG's annual evaluation of the Council's Library Service and receive information on how the Service has progressed and adapted its service provision during the year	Identification of any slippages in performance in order to formulate recommendations to redress the situation and ensure that the Service delivers the Council's Corporate Plan and its priorities in relation to Young People, Resilient and Connected Communities	<i>Liz Grieve/Bethan Hughes</i>	<i>March 2021</i>
	Cllr, Julian Thompson-Hill & Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	3. Staff Absences and Turnover in Denbighshire during 2020/21 & 2021/22 and its impact on Customer Services	To examine the data on: (i) staff absences per Council service during 2020/21 and the first three quarters of 2021/22 in comparison to previous years (including data on short and long-term absences);	<i>An assessment of the Council's resilience in dealing with the impact of a pandemic on its staffing resources and the effectiveness of its contingency planning in relation to staff retention and recruitment and how that</i>	<i>Gary Williams/Louise Dougal/Liz Grieve</i>	<i>By SCVCG September 2021</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			(ii) staff turnover per service during 2020/21 and the first three quarters of 2021/22 in comparison to previous years along with the number of staff resignations in each pay grade band (and the reasons for the resignations); (iii) Denbighshire's position in relation to staff absences and staff turnover in comparison to other local authorities and public bodies in Wales; (iv) the findings of the recent Workforce Planning exercise; and (v) the effect of COVID-19 on staff absences and turnover during this period and its consequential impact on customer services	<i>supported the customer experience during difficult times with a view to ensuring that lessons are learnt to further improve the Council's resilience to meet future pressures and unplanned events.</i>		
Possibly invite school reps to observe or participate School Meals Forum Representative to be invited as well to give a national perspective	Cllr. Brian Jones/Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	4. <i>Progress and future plan on reduction of single use plastics and carbon reduction in the School Meals Service</i>	To examine: (i) <i>the progress made to date with respect of reducing the Service's use of single use plastics within the Service and the school canteens across the county; and</i> (ii) <i>future plans for using single use plastics within the Service and how it aims to contribute towards the Council's aim of being net carbon zero by 2030</i>	<i>By sharing good practice to devise deliverable and solutions that will secure a sustainable Service for the future that provides food for the county's pupils whilst also reducing carbon output and supporting the Council's Environment corporate priority and delivering its Climate and Ecological Change Strategy</i>	Tony Ward/Hayley Jones	By SCVCG September 2021

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
on the issue						
17 March	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	1. Curriculum for Wales [Education]	To detail the progress made to date towards the implementation of the new Curriculum for Wales along with the support provided by the local education authority and GwE to schools, education staff and governing bodies in readiness for the delivery of the new curriculum from September 2022	Assurances that all educational establishments and staff are fully equipped and trained to deliver the new curriculum, identification of any gaps or risks associated with the provision and solutions to address them, ahead of its implementation with a view to ensuring that children and young people in Denbighshire realise their full potential in line with the Council's Corporate Plan	Geraint Davies/James Brown/GwE	June 2021
	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	2. Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Transformation [Education]	To examine the Council's compliance with the statutory requirements of the Additional Learning Needs and Education Tribunal (Wales) Act 2018	To reduce the risk of the Authority not complying with any of the requirements of the Act and to ensure that every pupil and student in the County is given the required support and opportunities to realise their full potential	Geraint Davies/Mari Gaskell/Joseph Earl	June 2021
28 April						
9 June	Cllr. Bobby Feeley	1. Draft Director of Social Services Annual Report	To scrutinise the content of the draft annual report to ensure it provides a fair and clear evaluation of performance and clearly articulates future plans	Identification of any specific performance issues which require further scrutiny by the committee in future	Nicola Stubbins	July 2021
14 July						

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
29 September	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	1. <i>Provisional External Examinations and Teacher Assessments [Education]</i> (tbc)	<i>To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children</i>	<i>Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement</i>	<i>Geraint Davies/GwE</i>	<i>July 2021</i>
	Cllr. Bobby Feeley	2. <i>Hafan Deg, Rhyl (tbc)</i> Representatives from KL Care to be invited to attend	<i>To monitor the effectiveness of the transfer of the facility and services to an external provider and the provider's progress in growing and expanding the services available at the centre, including the lessons learnt from COVID-19 and the new services commissioned as a result of the pandemic</i> <i>(the report to include an updated Well-being Impact Assessment)</i>	<i>To evaluate the impact of the transfer of the facility and services on all stakeholders and to assess whether the services provided at Hafan Deg are in line with the contract specification, support the Council's vision for adult social care and the five ways to well-being and the requirements of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014</i>	<i>Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Katie Newe/Ben Chandler</i>	<i>September 2019 (Rescheduled October 2020, January & March 2021 due to COVID-19)</i>
24 November						
January 2023	Cllr. Huw Hilditch-Roberts	1. <i>Verified External Examinations [Education]</i>	<i>To review the performance of schools and that of looked after children; and GwE's impact on the educational attainment of the County's pupils.</i> <i>The report to include actual figures in addition to percentages along with school absenteeism and exclusion data.</i> <i>The report to incorporate GwE's Annual report and information on</i>	<i>Scrutiny of performance leading to recommendations for improvement</i>	<i>Geraint Davies/GwE</i>	<i>July 2021</i>

Meeting	Lead Member(s)	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
			<i>the 5 year trend in relation to educational attainment in Denbighshire</i>			

Future Issues

Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Expected Outcomes	Author	Date Entered
<p><i>School Categorisation according to Welsh—medium Provision</i></p> <p><i>tbc (late 2021/early 2022) dependent upon WG</i></p> <p>Education</p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council's education policies and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/James Curran</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021</i></p>
<p><i>Learner Travel Measure (Wales) 2008</i></p> <p><i>tbc (late 2021/early 2022) dependent upon WG</i></p> <p>Education</p>	<p><i>To outline the conclusions of the recent Welsh Government consultation on the Measure and its implications for Denbighshire schools and pupils</i></p>	<p><i>Identification of potential changes to the Council's learner travel policy and any associated costs and budget implications</i></p>	<p><i>Geraint Davies/Ian Land</i></p>	<p><i>January 2021</i></p>
<p><i>Dolwen Residential Care Home</i></p>	<p><i>To consider the Task and Finish Group's recommendations relating to the future provision of services at Dolwen Residential Care Home, Denbigh</i></p>	<p><i>Pre-decision scrutiny of the task and finish group's findings and the formulation of recommendations for presentation to Cabinet with respect of the future provision of services at Dolwen with a view to ensuring that everyone is supported to live in homes that meet their needs and are able to live independent and resilient lives</i></p>	<p><i>Task and Finish Group/Phil Gilroy/Abbe Harvey</i></p>	<p><i>July 2018 (currently on-hold due to COVID-19)</i></p>
<p>Post 16 provision at Rhyl College (suggested for scrutiny during service challenge)</p> <p>Date tbc following the easing of COVID-19 restrictions</p>	<p><i>To examine the post 16 provision at Rhyl College</i></p>	<p><i>The development of an effective working relationship between the College and the Council to secure the delivery of courses required to support the delivery of the North Wales Growth Deal and improve the future prospects of the area's students</i></p>	<p>Rhyl College (and invite Geraint Davies & John Evans – post 16 officer from DCC)</p>	<p><i>By SCVCG July 2020</i></p>

Information/Consultation Reports

Date	Item (description / title)	Purpose of report	Author	Date Entered
November 2021	Position regarding Cefndy Healthcare Annual Reports 2019/20 & 2020/21 and Annual Plan 2021/22 & Options Appraisal for future business delivery	To consider: (i) the company's performance during 2019/20 & 2020/21 and its Annual Plan for 2021/22; and (ii) the findings of the Project Board's work in drawing up an options appraisal for future delivery of the company's business to enable the Committee to: (i) undertake an assessment of the company's performance in delivering its business within budget and meeting targets will assist with the identification of future trends and requirements; (ii) Formulate recommendations in relation to a future business model that will support the delivery of the Council's priority relating to Resilient Communities	Phil Gilroy/Ann Lloyd/Nick Bowles	August 2021
March 2022 & September 2022 [Information]	Corporate Plan 2017/22 Q1 2021/22 & Corporate Plan 2017/22 (Q3) 2021/22 To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan	Ensuring that the Council meets its targets and delivers its Corporate Plan and the Council's services in line with its aspirations and to the satisfaction of local residents	Alan Smith/lolo McGregor/Heidi Barton-Price	September 2018
Feb/May/Sept/November each year [Information]	Quarterly 'Your Voice' complaints performance to include social services complaints	To scrutinise Services' performance in complying with the Council's complaints and identify areas of poor performance with a view to the development of recommendations to address weaknesses. The report to include: (i) a comprehensive explanation on why targets have not been met when dealing with specific complaints, reasons for non-compliance, and measures taken to rectify the failures and to ensure that future	Kevin Roberts/Ann Lloyd/Phil Gilroy	November 2018

		<p>complaints will be dealt with within the specified timeframe;</p> <p>(ii) how services encourage feedback and use it to redesign or change the way they deliver services; and</p> <p>(iii) details of complaints which have been upheld or partially upheld and the lessons learnt from them.</p> <p>Report to include example(s) of complaints and compliment(s) received.</p> <p><i>Consideration of the information provided will assist the Committee to determine whether any issues merit detailed scrutiny</i></p>		
Information Report (June 2020 rescheduled to December 2021)	Housing Services – Review of the effectiveness of the new working model for Housing Officers and the development of new ways of working with residents from the lessons learnt through COVID-19	To review the effectiveness and impact of the new Housing Officer model in delivering personal advice and support to tenants, particularly those who reside in older people’s schemes	Geoff Davies	March 2019 (rescheduled May 2019 & then Jan 2021 at officers request due to COVID-19 pressures)

Note for officers – Committee Report Deadlines

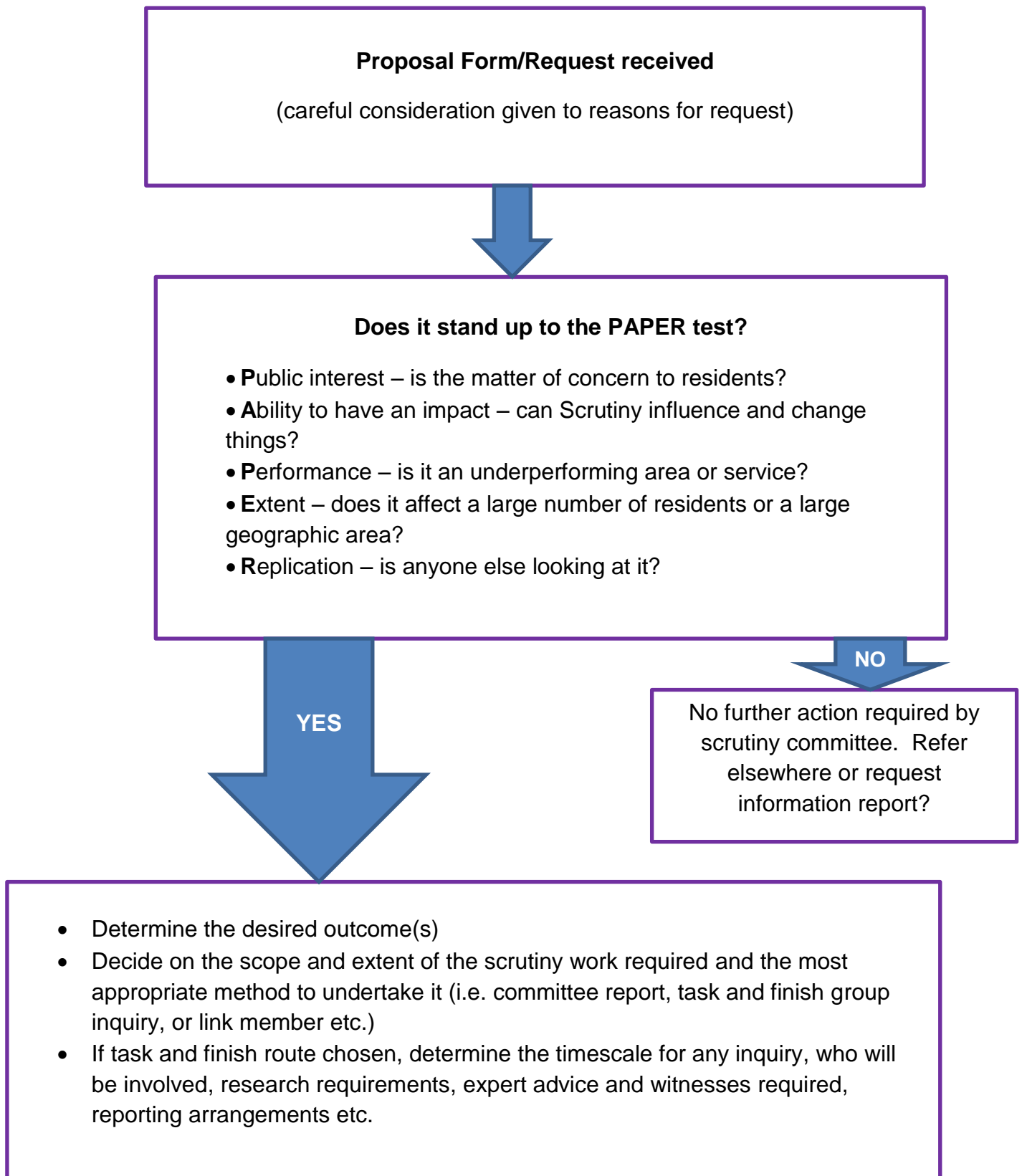
Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline	Meeting	Deadline
25 November	11 November	27 January 2022	13 January 2022	17 March	3 March

Performance Scrutiny Work Programme.doc
 Updated 04/10/2021 RhE

This page is intentionally left blank

Member Proposal Form for Scrutiny Forward Work Programme	
NAME OF SCRUTINY COMMITTEE	
TIMESCALE FOR CONSIDERATION	
TOPIC	
What needs to be scrutinised (and why)?	
Is the matter one of concern to residents/local businesses?	YES/NO
Can Scrutiny influence and change things? (if 'yes' please state how you think scrutiny can influence or change things)	YES/NO
Does the matter relate to an underperforming service or area?	YES/NO
Does the matter affect a large number of residents or a large geographical area of the County (if 'yes' please give an indication of the size of the affected group or area)	YES/NO
Is the matter linked to the Council's Corporate priorities (if 'yes' please state which priority/priorities)	YES/NO
To your knowledge is anyone else looking at this matter? (If 'yes', please say who is looking at it)	YES/NO
If the topic is accepted for scrutiny who would you want to invite to attend e.g. Lead Member, officers, external experts, service-users?	
Name of Councillor/Co-opted Member	
Date	

Consideration of a topic's suitability for scrutiny



Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
19 Oct	1	Graphic Design and Print Framework	To seek approval for the tender award to suppliers	Yes	Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts / Sian Owen / Cheryl Evans
	2	Award of the Concession Contract for the operation of Household Recycling Centres (Conwy and Denbighshire)	To seek approval of the contract award [by Conwy County Borough Council]	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Tara Dumas / Alan L Roberts
	3	Proposed approach to tendering for phase 2 contract for DCC Waste Transfer Station, Colomendy Industrial Estate, Denbigh	To seek Cabinet approval for the tender process	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Peter Clayton
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
23 Nov	1	Corporate Plan Update: July to September 2021	To monitor the Council's progress in delivering the Corporate Plan 2017 – 2022	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Iolo McGregor
	2	Levelling Up – Vale of Clwyd and Clwyd West bid approval			Councillor Hugh Evans / Emlyn Jones / Gareth

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
					Roberts
	3	Contract Award – Redevelopment of the former library in Nant Hall Road, Prestatyn	To award the construction contract for council housing development	Yes	Councillors Tony Thomas & Julian Thompson-Hill / Mark Dixon
	4	Future of Meifod	To consider the future operation of services at Meifod following the recent engagement exercise with citizens who attend and their families	Yes	Councillor Bobby Feeley / Phil Gilroy
	5	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	6	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
14 Dec	1	Welsh in Education Strategic Plan	To approve the new Welsh in Education Strategic Plan before submission to Welsh Government.	Tbc	Councillor Huw Hilditch-Roberts/ Carwyn Edwards
	2	Queens Market Phase 1 – award construction contract	To seek approval to award a contract for the delivery of Phase 1 of the Queens	Yes	Councillor Hugh Evans / Russell Vaughan

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
			Building Rhyl		
	3	Proposed Minimum Standard for Denbighshire County Council New Build and Major Extension/Refurbishment Construction Projects	A decision is required on the adoption and implementation of the proposed minimum standard which would impose a duty on all Council services to ensure all new build and major extensions/refurbishment construction projects are built to meet in use and embodied carbon targets	Yes	Councillor Brian Jones / David Lorey
	4	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	5	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator
18 Jan	1	Central Rhyl Flood Defence Scheme	To recommend that Council agree the funding for the schemes and permit the service to proceed to the construction phase	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony Ward / Wayne Hope / Matthew Hazlewood / Helen Johnson
	2	Prestatyn Flood Defence	To recommend that Council	Tbc	Councillor Brian Jones / Tony

Cabinet Forward Work Plan

Meeting	Item (description / title)		Purpose of report	Cabinet Decision required (yes/no)	Author – Lead member and contact officer
		Scheme	agree the funding for the schemes and permit the service to proceed to the construction phase		Ward / Wayne Hope / Matthew Hazlewood / Helen Johnson
	3	Finance Report	To update Cabinet on the current financial position of the Council	Tbc	Councillor Julian Thompson-Hill / Steve Gadd
	4	Items from Scrutiny Committees	To consider any issues raised by Scrutiny for Cabinet's attention	Tbc	Scrutiny Coordinator

Note for officers – Cabinet Report Deadlines

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<i>October</i>	<i>5 October</i>	<i>November</i>	<i>9 November</i>	<i>December</i>	<i>30 November</i>

Updated 04/05/2021 - KEJ

Cabinet Forward Work Programme.doc

Progress with Committee Resolutions

Date of Meeting	Item number and title	Resolution	Progress
15 July 2021	5. DRAFT DIRECTOR OF SOCIAL SERVICES ANNUAL REPORTS 2019/20 & 2020/21	<i>RESOLVED that, subject to the above observations and the provision of the requested information, to confirm that the reports provided a clear account of performance in 2019 – 2020 and 2020 – 21.</i>	Lead Member, Director of Social Services/Corporate Director: Communities and officers informed of the Committee's recommendations. Officers undertook to forward the Committee's appreciation of all social care staff's efforts and hard work during the pandemic on to the staff.

This page is intentionally left blank